The Cozening

(cozen [kuhz-uhn] to cheat, deceive, or trick)

A Murder of Promise

A novel by Lefty Insider

Introduction

This is a short version of a much longer story. It is after all, the story of a life amidst a technology revolution. This story is not for the faint of heart or those who do not really like to read. So if you are one of those, I would suggest that you stop now to save yourself some time and effort, and perhaps frustration. But if you are not, or just have nothing better to do now, and decide to slog through these pages, I can promise that your time spent will be worth it.

Author's note

This book is a work of historical fiction, inspired by some actual history and truths. Apart from the well-known actual people, events, and locales that figure into the narrative, all names, characters, places, and incidents are products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Most of the observations, commentaries, and thoughts reflected in the message conversations and new stories within are real. Everything else is fictionalized.

Acknowledgements

To my wife, who makes everything possible.

To the many proofreaders, whose excellent work helped edit, and refine these stories.

To the Merry Band of Misfits and Malcontents in the Insider and Epic Fail Forum, whose knowledge, passion, brilliance, and dedication encouraged and inspired me to write this.

A special thank you to Jackson Browne, Warren Haynes, Tom Petty, Neil Young, Mark Knopfler, Van Morrison and other musicians too numerous to mention, who's lifetime catalogs of music provided the background for this project.

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The WinFS file system material deals in abstract concepts. Graphic descriptions are required for full comprehension.

This story describes a WinFS file system used to browse structured data types. Because no applications exist, screenshots are necessary to understand how the proposed RealOS user interface would appear. This software is copyrighted and as such, a free equivalent cannot exist.

WinFS has been cancelled, and the time limited-public preview releases have expired, and therefore it is impossible to create self-made screenshots.

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Contents

Introduction 2
Author's note 2
Acknowledgements 2
Fair use rationale - illustrations & lyrics 3
Contents 4
Chapter One, Windows 10 5
Chapter Two, The Insider Forum 12
Insider Story 1 34
Insider Story 10 41
Insider Story 11 46
Insider Story 100 60
Insider Story 101 65
Insider Story 110 75
Insider Story 111 94
Intermission 129
Insider Story 1000 130
Insider Story 1001 167
Insider Story 1010 185
Insider Story 1011 202
The Cast of Characters 211
The Good Guys and Gals 211
The Bad Guys 215
Chapter Three, Nearing the End 216
Epilogue 301
About the author 306

Chapter One, Windows 10

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In 2013 Microsoft or MS, announced that the next version of Windows would be called Windows 10. They would skip over the next numerically sequential version, which would have been 9 for unknown reasons. This time however they decided to release a Technical Preview or TP, much earlier in development than they ever before, and this time it was perhaps Alpha code. They also had recently gone through their first employee layoff ever, including massive personnel cuts in their software testing departments.

For this TP, MS created an online Insider Forum. This was the place for discussion, and user-to-user help, moderated by MS business partners and selected moderators, but not MS employees. At least not to anyone's direct knowledge. Approximately 1.2 million people initially joined the Insider Program, which grew to 5 million at the time of the software release to the public, and to 7 million a month afterward as reported by MS. Each downloaded at least one of the numerous builds of the necessarily incomplete and now and again ridiculously buggy early operating system versions.

Over the years, MS had offered beta level software to business partners like Lefty. These beta versions were vetted by MS's internal testing, and then released into the wider world for additional testing. The feel this time was different with this TP. It appeared to be pre-beta code, or Alpha level software. Speculation by long time beta testers concluded that following the employee layoffs a year earlier, many of them being from the testing group, that this new approach became their newly designed testing process. The suspicion was that the plan created by MS, involved a release to the wider world earlier than ever before. This plan was rumored to replace the function of these laid off testers, with the unsuspecting Insiders.

Problems ensued near instantaneously; as MS did not put an adequate internal structure in place accomplish their plan. They built a Feedback App into Windows 10, but this did not work reliably for anyone.

The suspected remaining MS Win10 testing department

Previous Windows testing programs since Windows 95, by design were limited to those who were *aware*, primarily the geeks. Thus being self-limited to those who knew how to download, install, and configure the software. They were also limited to those who had some connection with MS as a partner or customer, and who could find the relatively obscure blogs used for communication with MS.

Now however, the Insider Program was a new expanded direction for MS and was wide open to anyone willing to beta test and had an Internet connection. The digital bits and bytes[1] (a build) were now available to download for anyone who could learn about it on the Internet, or by word of mouth, so the program attracted many people with no prior experience. Absent change lists, and without any outline of feature changes between each build, coupled with limited information about known bugs,[2] made testing difficult for the Insiders. Over the next few years, there was both official release builds of the Windows 10 TP, and some unofficially leaked builds.

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[1] *The byte is a unit of digital information that most commonly consists of eight bits. The byte is the number of bits used to encode a single character of text.*
[2] *A software bug is an error, flaw, failure, or fault in a computer program that causes it to produce incorrect or unexpected results. Most bugs arise due to mistakes and human errors made in the writing of its source code. A program that contains a large number of bugs is referred to as buggy (defective).*

The Windows 10 TP beta testing process

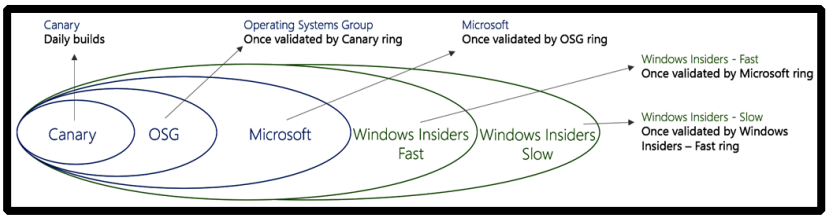
1. During the development process for a new version of the Windows Operating System, the initial Build of the software is named the Canary Ring. These are daily builds tested by a small OS team.

2. The next version is named the OSG Ring (Operating Systems Group) and is tested by the developers who are team members of that group. The members of this group test and validate that ring.

3. The next version is named the Microsoft Ring. This version is distributed to Microsoft Employees for testing and validation.

4. The next version is named the Fast Ring. This ring is uploaded and made available to the public. These are the Expert Insiders who are Installing, Testing, and Validating, the Preview builds of the Windows 10 Technical Preview.

5. The next version is named the **Slow** Ring. This version is the last in the series of Rings for that build. When a version was moved to the Slow Ring, the .iso file was also released.



Windows 10 TP beta testing process

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

During this process, each group of testers report any problems in that Ring and these problems are sometimes fixed, prior to the next Ring being released (Validation).

As an Insider, you could choose which Ring you would like in the Windows 10 PC Settings App. Most testers would install the Slow Ring version having been validated by the most groups, and thus thought to contain the fewest bugs.[3]

Lefty signed up for the Insider program in September and would test these builds for the next few years within two different hardware environments.

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[3] *A 2002 study commissioned by the US Department of Commerce's NIST concluded software bugs, or errors, are so prevalent and so detrimental that they cost the US economy an estimated $59 billion each year. It is generally excepted that typical software has from 1 to 5 bugs per 1000 lines of code.*

Lefty ran the software builds inside a virtual machine or VM,[4] on his main laptop computer to test using keyboard and mouse. He did his reading and writing of Insider messages, reading news stories, and writing the Insider stories from within this VM. He also ran the builds natively on his tablet computer, which he previously used for Windows 8 testing, to test with a touch screen and in the OS's Tablet Mode. He ran the Fast Ring on the VM first and Slow Ring on the tablet later, as he also used this for web surfing and sometimes for reading digital books. After the RTM, there was mostly Fast Rings builds as most were too buggy for the Slow Ring. He ran the Win10TP builds during this time without any significant problems, just limited functionality, usability, control, and some minor annoyances. This was *not ever* an OS he would use for productive work, as these bits represented a stripped down, ugly, featureless, and less capable version. It presented a significant devolution of the Windows he had known and loved for years.

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

[4] *A virtual machine is an emulation of a particular computer operating system, in which a guest Operating System or OS, runs within the host OS.*

The following is a brief history of software testing, courtesy of Wikipedia.

Usage of the "alpha/beta" test terminology originated at IBM. As long ago as the 1950s (and probably earlier), IBM used similar terminology for their hardware development. "A" test was the verification of a new product before public announcement. "B" test was the verification before releasing the product to be manufactured. "C" test was the final test before general availability of the product. As software became a significant part of IBM's offerings, the alpha test terminology was used to denote the pre-announcement test and beta test was used to show product readiness for general availability.

Pre-alpha refers to all activities performed during the software project before testing. These activities can include requirements analysis, software design, software development, and unit testing. In typical open source development, there are several types of pre-alpha versions. Milestone versions include specific sets of functions and are released as soon as the functionality is complete.

The alpha phase of the release life cycle is the first phase to begin software testing (alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet, used as the number 1). In this phase, developers generally test the software using white-box techniques. Additional validation is then performed using black-box or gray-box techniques, by another testing team. Moving to black-box testing inside the organization is known as alpha release.

Alpha software can be unstable and could cause crashes or data loss. In general, external availability of alpha software is uncommon in proprietary software, while open source software often has publicly available alpha versions. The alpha phase usually ends with a feature freeze, indicating that no more features will be added to the software. At this time, the software is said to be feature complete.

Beta, named after the second letter of the Greek alphabet, is the software development phase following alpha. Software in the beta stage is also known as betaware. It generally begins when the software is feature complete but likely to contain a number of known or unknown bugs. Software in the beta phase will generally have many more bugs in it than completed software, as well as speed/performance issues and may still cause crashes or data loss. The focus of beta testing is reducing impacts to users, often incorporating usability testing. The process of delivering a beta version to the users is called beta release and this is typically the first time that the software is available outside of the organization that developed it. Beta version software is often useful for demonstrations and previews within an organization and to prospective customers. Some developers refer to this stage as a preview, prototype, technical preview / technology preview (TP), or early access. Some software is kept in perpetual beta, where new features and functionality are continually added to the software without establishing a firm "final" release.

Beta testers are people who actively report issues of beta software. They are usually customers or representatives of prospective customers of the organization that develops the software. Beta testers tend to volunteer their services free of charge but often receive versions of the product they test, discounts on the release version, or other incentives.

As the Internet has facilitated rapid and inexpensive distribution of software, companies have begun to take a looser approach to use of the word "beta". In February 2005, ZDNet published an article about the recent phenomenon of a beta version often staying for years and being used as if it were in production level, disparagingly called "perpetual beta". It noted that Gmail and Google News, for example, had been in beta for a long period of time and were not expected to drop the beta status despite the fact that they were widely used; however, Google News did leave beta in January 2006, followed by Google Apps, including Gmail, in July 2009. This technique may allow a developer to delay offering full support and responsibility for remaining issues. In the context of Web 2.0, people even talk of perpetual betas to signify that some software is meant to stay in beta state. Also, "beta" is sometimes used to indicate something more like a release candidate, or as a form of time-limited demo, or marketing technique.

Developers release either a closed beta or an open beta; closed beta versions are released to a restricted group of individuals for a user test by invitation, while open beta testers are from a larger group, or anyone interested. The testers report any bugs that they find, and sometimes suggest additional features they think should be available in the final version. Examples of public beta tests include:

Open betas serve the dual purpose of demonstrating a product to potential consumers, and testing among an extremely wide user base likely to bring to light obscure errors that a much smaller testing team might not find.

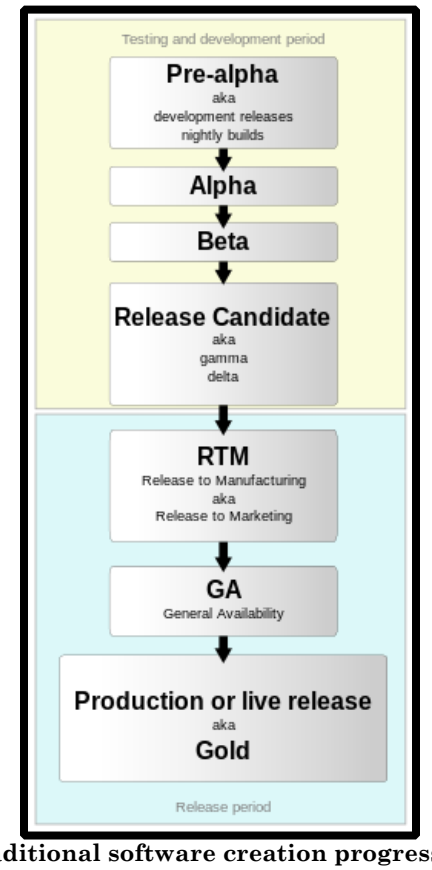
A release candidate (RC) is a beta version with potential to be a final product, which is ready to release unless significant bugs emerge. In this stage of product stabilization, all product features have been designed, coded and tested through one or more beta cycles with no known showstopper-class bug. A release is called code complete when the development team agrees that no entirely new source code will be added to this release. There could still be source code changes to fix defects, changes to documentation and data files, and peripheral code for test cases or utilities. Beta testers, if privately selected, will often be credited for using the release candidate as though it were a finished product. Beta testing is conducted in a client's or customer's location and to test the software from a user's perspective.

The term "release to manufacturing", also known as "going gold", is a term used when a software product is ready to be delivered or provided to the customer. This build may be digitally signed, allowing the end user to verify the integrity and authenticity of the software purchase. A copy of the RTM build known as the "gold master" or GM is sent for mass duplication. RTM precedes general availability (GA), when the product is released to the public.

It is typically used in certain retail mass-production software contexts—as opposed to a specialized software production or project in a commercial or government production and distribution—where the software is sold as part of a bundle in a related computer hardware sale and typically where the software and related hardware is ultimately to be available and sold on mass/public basis at retail stores to indicate that the software has met a defined quality level and is ready for mass retail distribution. RTM could also mean in other contexts that the software has been delivered or released to a client or customer for installation or distribution to the related hardware end user computers or machines. The term does not define the delivery mechanism or volume; it only states that the quality is sufficient for mass distribution. The deliverable from the engineering organization is frequently in the

form of a golden master media used for duplication or to produce the image for the web.

General availability is the marketing stage at which all necessary commercialization activities have been completed and a software product is available for purchase, and media availability. Commercialization activities could include security and compliance tests, as well as localization and world wide availability. The time between RTM and GA can be from a week, months in some cases before a generally available release can be declared because of the time needed to complete all commercialization activities required by GA. At this stage, the software has "gone live".



Traditional software creation progression

Chapter Two, The Insider Forum

C:\novel\chapt2\type forum.txt ↵

The first released Windows 10TP build, numbered 9841 was made available in October, and delivered as a downloadable update to computers which had an existing activated version of Windows 7 or 8.1. Users needed to create and login using a Microsoft Account or MSA, and those who signed up for the Insider program received the offer. This was initially not available as a separate downloadable .iso file, unlike previous Windows beta tests, which became an early indicator of things yet to come.

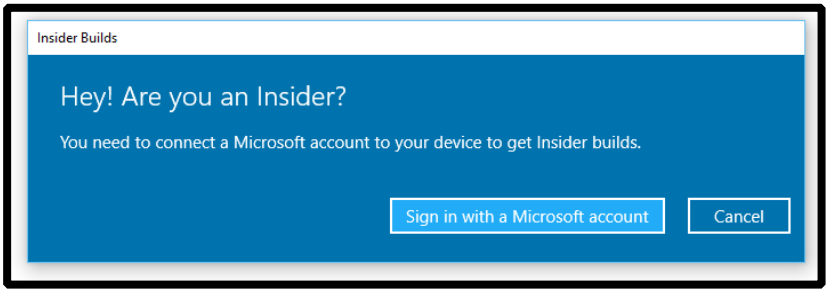


Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

A Feedback App, now built into the software, occasionally worked and allowed the Insiders to post ideas and comments. Frustrations with that App caused many forum members to post their ideas and comments into the discussion threads on the forum. This in turn created many extended length excellent discussions, suggestions for features and improvements, not facilitated by the Feedback App. These included disputes between unlike-minded users, humorous postings, some trolls, and the all too often horror story. The MS build team responsible for building the software probably never saw any of this, much to their disadvantage in Lefty's view.

Inside the forum software website, when you checked a selection box to follow a particular discussion or message thread, you would receive any additional messages from Insiders in the form of emails directly from the MS Insider forum.

Microsoft

Community

YOUR PROFILE | FAQ

Hello Lefty,
A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from Metal480AZ.

Title: Rate your Win 10 Experience so far!
Reply

I haven't used it a whole lot mainly because of the keylogger, but I installed it last week in VirtualBox and within about an hour I broke the start menu (it wouldn't open). It's not done yet, I understand that. there's gonna be problems. I was surprised at how many privacy setting options there were. Otherwise, some stuff I do like, such as the start menu and the dark taskbar. I happen to like tiles. I have Windows 8.1. but spend most of my time now using Linux dual-booting -- it's more enjoyable to me, and the Windows 10 start menu is an improvement over Windows 8, but overall I like Windows 7 best. I just don't find Windows 10 to be super exciting. I remember going from like Windows 3.11 to Windows 95. That was awesome, huge improvement. Also going from Windows 98 to Windows XP, huge improvement. Then Windows XP to Windows 7 also a very nice improvement. I just don't see that happening going to Windows 10. It kind of feels like a step backwards from Windows 7 but a step forward from Windows 8.1. Maybe I just need to use it more.

Read this reply on Microsoft Community.
NEXT STEPS*
Did you like this reply? Give Metal480AZ some kudos!
[Like this reply]
Want to unsubscribe from this thread?
Click here to go to the thread, click on the original post and click **Stop emails**.
*Sign in required. When you open the thread, you'll see that your action has been automatically recorded.

In this forum, a group of experienced users formed a bond. They helped each other, and they helped less experienced users work though problems. They provided feedback to Microsoft when the Feedback App actually worked. They provided Feedback on the Feedback App itself, and they voted on the feedback of others to establish priorities of the most important items to them.

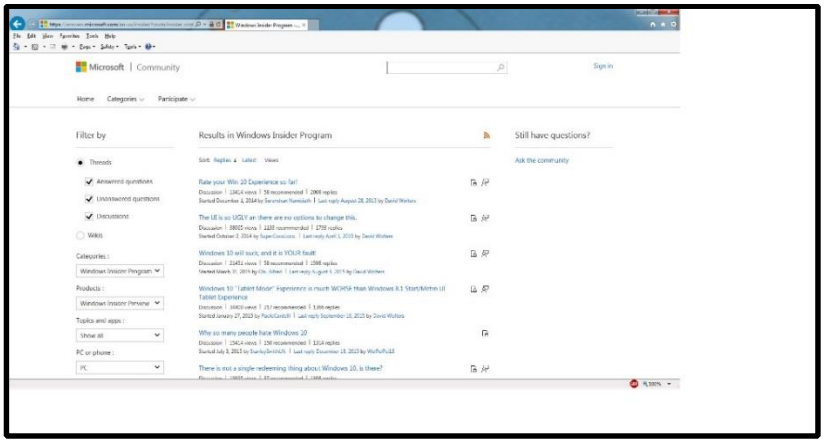
The forum software also allowed them to use graphic Avatars to represent a message poster visually, and allowed the use of taglines as signatures at the end of their messages. These were often used to make relevant and sometimes humorous quotes from history, music lyrics, TV shows and movies.

They also complained inside the forum about this built-in Feedback App.

> ***Insider users now are being separated by country and continent in the forum and Windows Feedback app ?!***
>
> *how is it supposed that now Insider users will be able to communicate with each other in a general way, debating and reporting the same bugs, if now the forums and the Windows Feedback app are being separated by country and continent ?*
>
> *this means that now will not be possible to share ideas between Insiders of different countries and continents ?*
>
> *previously we all were able to communicate with each other using English as universal language, but now I only can see the messages of a specific location and not from all countries or continents. Same troubles are happening now with Windows Feedback app.*
>
> "They've done studies, you know. 60 percent of the time, it works every time." — Brian Fantana from the movie Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy
>
> *Answer ARArvind Ram replied on January 24*
>
> *Microsoft Forum Moderator, Support Engineer*
>
> *In reply to MELERIX's post on January 24*
>
> *Hi, Thank you for your response.*
>
> *The limitations on locations is by design on the new build of Windows 10 Technical Preview. Once again we thank you for your feedback.*
>
> *In reply to Arvind Ram's post on January 24*
>
> *I strongly dislike this design. I'd love to contribute in an international version, mine local is uninteresting and poor enough to leave me with a feeling the feedback from there's going to be completely ignored. Furthermore, that causes plenty of duplicate feedback that could have been merged.*
>
> "Everyone has a choice when to or not to raise their voices. It is you that decides." George Harrison

The *Insiders* messaged each other in the forum creating message threads, which became useful for stimulating discussions, proving or disproving ideas, and solving technical issues. They found common ground and some solace in that. These messages were articulate, logical, funny, clever witty, and occasionally depressing, pessimistic, and jaded. Nevertheless, the Insiders stayed at this for a couple of years. They also liked the stories Lefty would later write to entertain, stimulate, and encourage them.

These members would be banned, rejoined, banned, and rejoined again. They were ignored, disrespected, and denigrated by Microsoft, but no matter the attempted deflections, they could not be deterred. They signed up for a mission, which many felt they failed at during Windows 8 testing, but which they now became especially determined to complete however fruitless and pointless it appeared at times. They knew that the reason the Native American rain dances always work, is because they do not stop dancing until it rains.



The Insider Forum

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

Initial reactions from the experienced users in the forum were not good. The most popular thread[5] titled, "This UI (user interface) is so Ugly, and there is no way to Change it".

[5] *A message thread is a discussion or conversation where the messages are linked together in order.*

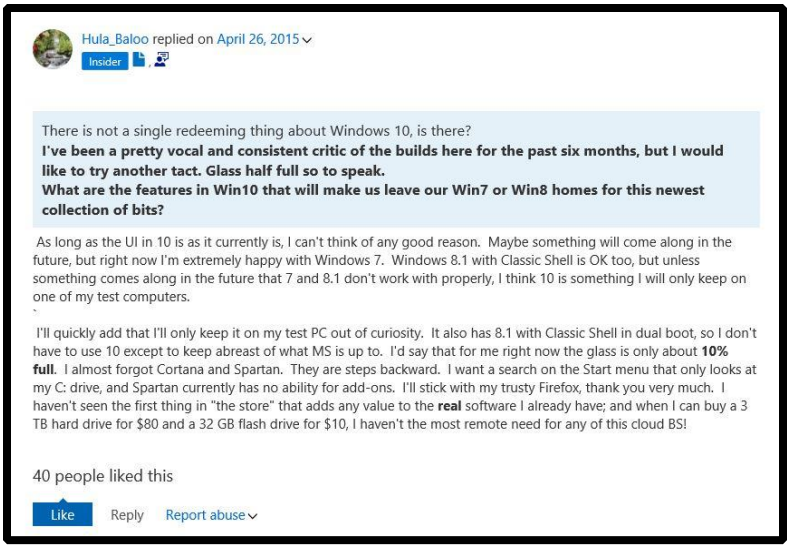


Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

Everything got worse at that point. In an effort to create platform standardization, or a common OS for all hardware form factors, MS had now designed a radical new user interface. This was to support devices from a four-inch phone screen, having limited CPU power, graphics capability, and battery life, to holographs, and IOT[6], desktop and laptop computers, all the way to a 60-inch Surface screen. Microsoft now had changed the historical interface for Windows versions used a skeuomorphic[7] 2-D design with a three-dimensional appearance, derived from Xerox PARC. Originally, these were created as one dimensional black and white icons and folders invented originally for the PARC Star interface. Now MS went backwards in time to a flat minimalistic pastel colored one-dimensional design, supposedly suitable for *all* computer form factors large and small. This reminded Lefty of the old SNL *Shimmer* spoof commercial. [8]

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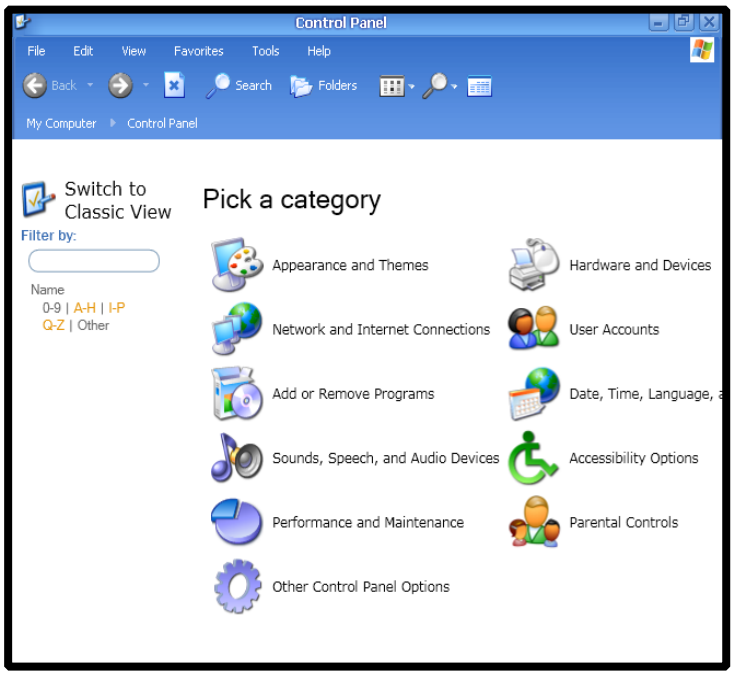
[6] *The Internet of Things is the internetworking of devices, vehicles, buildings, and other items embedded with electronics, software, sensors, actuators, and network connectivity which enable these objects to collect and exchange data.*
[7] *A skeuomorph is an object which retains design attributes inherent to the original object. In other words, it looks like something real in the physical world..*
[8] *"New Shimmer is both a floor wax and a dessert topping! Here, I'll spray some on your mop and some on your butterscotch pudding." SNL Season 1: Episode 9*

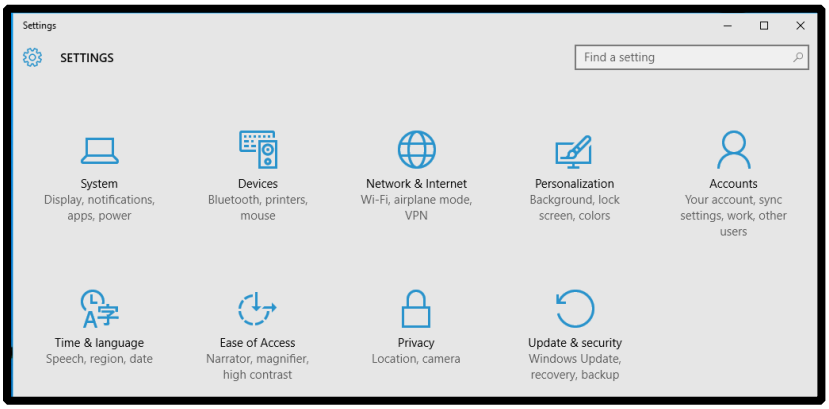
One product family, One Platform, One Store

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

Many Insiders cringed at the new Microsoft mantra, "Mobile First, Cloud First". Those reading the forums, many from 1995 on, became accustomed to using a Windows OS that was visually pleasing and functionally appealing.

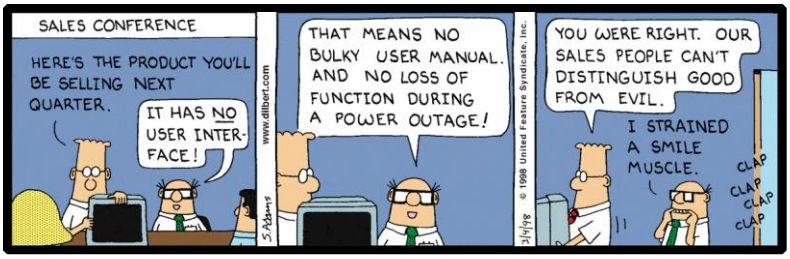


Now they saw something primitive, and commented that their children could draw better icons than these. They thought technology should have advanced more from the 1990's.

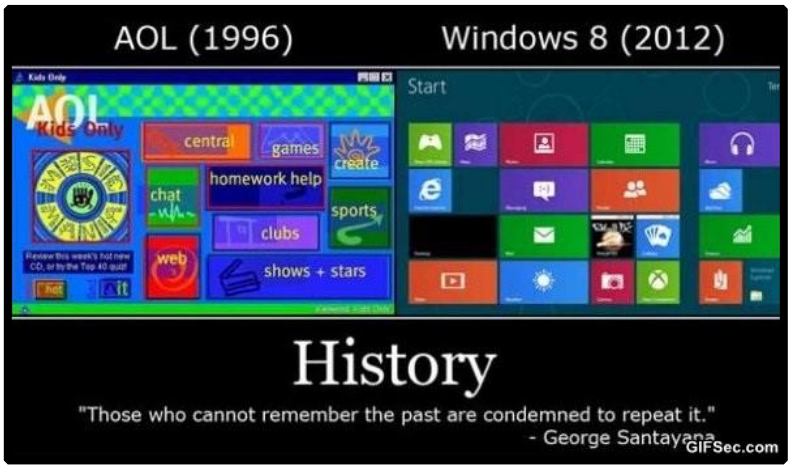


Suspected MS interface design team

The reaction was both immediate and negative. This OS appeared to be all oysters and no pearls. The Insiders made fun of the OS interface using Dilbert cartoons.



They complained that MS learned nothing from previous interface failures like "MS Bob" and the recent Windows 8 disaster, and were now repeating the same mistakes. They made their points with the posting of images.



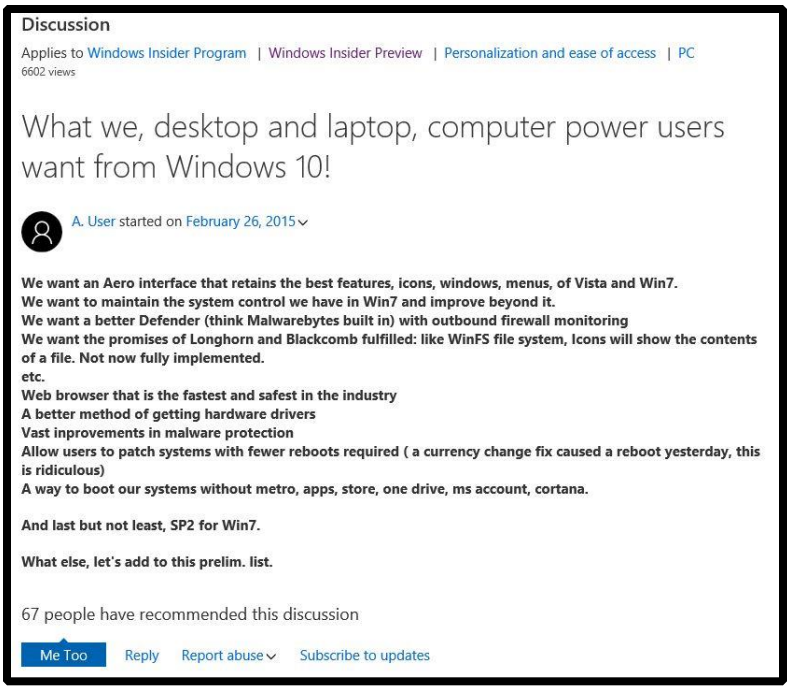
Recognizing this project had severely gone off the tracks and was headed in the wrong direction, a consensus developed among the most prolific and vocal Insiders. Before long, other threads emerged like Lefty's creation "What we, desktop and laptop, computer power users want from Windows 10!"

The Insiders created a consensus-built list of gripes.

1. We want an Aero interface that retains the best features, icons, windows, menus, of Vista and Win7. Granular controls so you can pick and choose items. A Fully featured Aero Glass re-implementation will have:

•Visual styles on controls that allow us to more easily differentiate things like buttons, scroll bars, etc. The time for flat and lifeless has come and gone, and there's nothing wrong with differentiating the look and feel of the true desktop applications from the content of Metro/Modern Apps. They actually do work differently.

•Parameters for setting the sizes (and ideally shapes) of the screen elements. Some of us prefer a small and rounded appearance, some of us are fond of big and square-cornered. There is no reason we can't all have what we like. We need the ability to configure ALL the sizes, colors, transparency, depth of drop shadows, etc.*


Discussion

Applies to Windows Insider Program | Windows Insider Preview | Personalization and ease of access | PC

6602 views

What we, desktop and laptop, computer power users want from Windows 10!

A. User started on February 26, 2015

We want an Aero interface that retains the best features, icons, windows, menus, of Vista and Win7.
We want to maintain the system control we have in Win7 and improve beyond it.
We want a better Defender (think Malwarebytes built in) with outbound firewall monitoring
We want the promises of Longhorn and Blackcomb fulfilled: like WinFS file system, Icons will show the contents of a file. Not now fully implemented.
etc.
Web browser that is the fastest and safest in the industry
A better method of getting hardware drivers
Vast inprovements in malware protection
Allow users to patch systems with fewer reboots required (a currency change fix caused a reboot yesterday, this is ridiculous)
A way to boot our systems without metro, apps, store, one drive, ms account, cortana.

And last but not least, SP2 for Win7.

What else, let's add to this prelim. list.

67 people have recommended this discussion

Me Too Reply Report abuse Subscribe to updates

•Elegance by design. The point here is: Do NOT deliver a dumbed-down version. Provide FULL control. The hardware is more capable of supporting this than ever in history. Microsoft, if you want Windows to have a particular look and feel, make the DEFAULT CONFIGURATION that. But don't require or expect everyone to keep it.

For example: Add 3D elements. Buttons, lists, tree-views, etc. should have 3D elements such as raised, etched, and sunken borders. This is one of the reasons why it's hard to see various elements like buttons especially on the taskbar because there's nothing clearly defining them. 2 overlapping rectangles with no edges or 3D components makes them indistinguishable from one another.

Restore the window color and appearance dialogs which were last seen in win 7, if we are to have choice then there must be at least 3 options

a > Aero + customization

b > Win 8 style flat eye sore junk

c > Classic theme with window color and appearance customizations,

Resurrecting a brilliant, usable Aero Glass theme does NOT mean returning to a look of the past. It could look very modern, be very different from Vista\Windows 7, yet still provide important usability enhancements to the desktop.

2. We want to maintain the system control we have in Win7 and improve beyond it.

3. A better Defender (think Malwarebytes) with outbound firewall monitoring with extensible and granular controls

4. We want the promises of Cairo, Longhorn and Blackcomb fulfilled: like WinFS file system, Icons will show the contents of a file. Still not fully implemented.

5. A Web browser that is the fastest and safest.

6. A better method of getting hardware drivers

7. Vast improvements in malware protection

8. Allow users to patch systems with fewer reboots

9. A way to boot our systems without metro, apps, store, one drive, MS account, skype, Cortana. Granular controls so you can pick and choose items. Initial Start Menu: Do not load it with a whole bunch of Apps that may not be wanted. Settings, Feedback, Store, and for the Tech Preview Insider Hub should be enough.

Then the users can go to either All Apps(Programs) or the Store to get any others needed.

10. Add back and improve Media Center to support Blu-ray and streaming. Make improvements to TV guide to keep up with existing technologies like tvo and direct tv. Play DRM channels, burn DVD's and Blue-Rays.

11. Fix/rollback Windows Update to what we had and improve it. Faster update and the entire update model reverted back. Updates and upgrades take time to develop, time to mature and work out the kinks. We don't want to be forever beta testers. We don't mind waiting a few years for a large release. it gives us time to focus on other things such as our real work. I don't see a benefit to fixing broken compatibility and coming up with new workarounds each time a new so called minor version is dropped. I don't want to be working on my OS with windows 10.66. It should be as simple as "Set it and forget it". Corporate IT will not stand for this. How would you even standardize images?

12. Leave control panel as it and improve it

13. Rename All Apps back to All Programs.

14. Taskbar buttons are now all but indistinguishable from one another, put this back to what it was

15. Start menu that has basic features like pinning not just dead tiles but also link to either side.

16. Jump lists and context menus that bare the same functionality that we once had.

17. Separate OS's based on device. We don't need or want one OS for every device.

18. Give us the calculator program back. Not an app.

19. Give us Solitaire back. Some of us use this to train new users with the mouse, remember?

20. Remove the lock screen on devices that don't need it. On giant large format monitors it's just another step to log in. Even with added features like displaying weather or other info it just looks bad. We already have a login screen and if it's a must you can add pertinent info there as an option. The ability to disable it does exist as a group policy but for desktops it should be disabled by default. Make it a continuum feature if you must.

21. Would like to be able to see the password prompt and enter my password immediately. As it is, keystrokes typed on the lock screen are lost. The extra step (and delay) is a nuisance. Two possible solutions:

Remove the lock screen entirely for non-touch devices, which must follow suggestion b. below.

b. Display the time, date, and other icons on the logon screen directly.

Keep the lock screen, but with these stipulations:

Boot to login screen, lock screen after 15 seconds.

All keystrokes typed on the lock screen must be forwarded to the password box. Presumably a tablet or phone would not have an exposed physical keyboard, thus the lock screen would continue to provide its intended purpose.

22. Add Customizable Logon Screen Background Image. In Windows 7 and earlier, the wallpaper behind the logon screen could be set. Now it is just a solid color and cannot be changed. Would like to set the login background image to my desktop wallpaper for a more fluid login experience.

23. Would like to see something done with the user pic in the login screen. The giant bulky square just sticks out. Maybe an option for a picture frame or something similar to XP's login screen with some translucence.

24. Would like to add an in place backup and nonstop backup system. We should be able to just right click a folder and select backup. No need to place it in another location. nonstop backup should monitor files/folders and make differential/incremental backups as changes occur similar to time machine from mac. Of course, we should be able to control the backups such as locations and scheduling. Backups should allow for local, remote on a network, and cloud locations as well as backup to multiple locations i.e. to a local HDD and to the cloud.

25. On Continuum[9], when you attach a keyboard give us Windows 7 interface and when you take it off and have a touch screen give us Windows 8.1

26. How about putting some functionality back into simple programs such a Sound Recorder and bring back a simple terminal program such as HyperTerminal. How about a network monitor icon that actually gives you some indication of network traffic.

27. A new Send To option in the context menu that opens an open file dialog box. It would make copying files/folders from one place to another faster and easier. Simply right click a file and select send to. Browse for the new location and it's copied there. Can also add an option to move instead of copy. Drag

[9] *Continuum is an experience on compatible Windows 10 Mobile devices . With Continuum-compatible accessories, you can connect to a monitor and even to a mouse and keyboard to make your phone work like a laptop. Sort of.*

and drop is great but this method wouldn't require two open explorer windows.

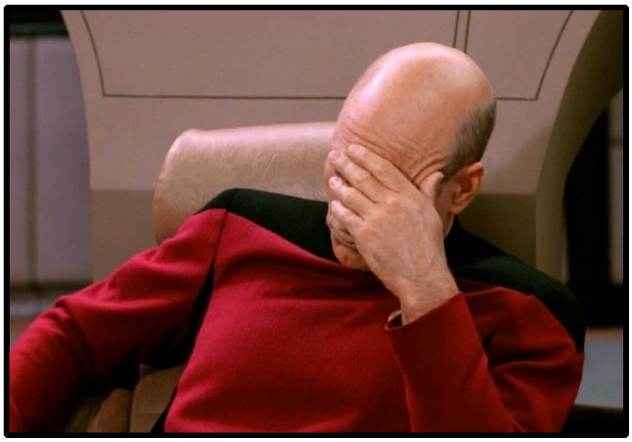
28. An improved WinPE base environment with user setup incorporated into it. We want an ISO of a base environment that then lets you run a program to select the ISO we wish to install, which allows you to place any number of ISO's on a HDD and then boot to it and select whatever ISO you want.

And last but not least, SP2, and a promise for SP3, for Win7.

This twenty-eight point list, became an early indication that Microsoft had missed the mark by a wide margin with the most experienced and dedicated part of its user base.

Even some TV comedians and actors voiced dismay.

Really? — For Fucks Sake!



Make It *Not* So, Number One

MS fanbois and shills thought MS had just missed it:

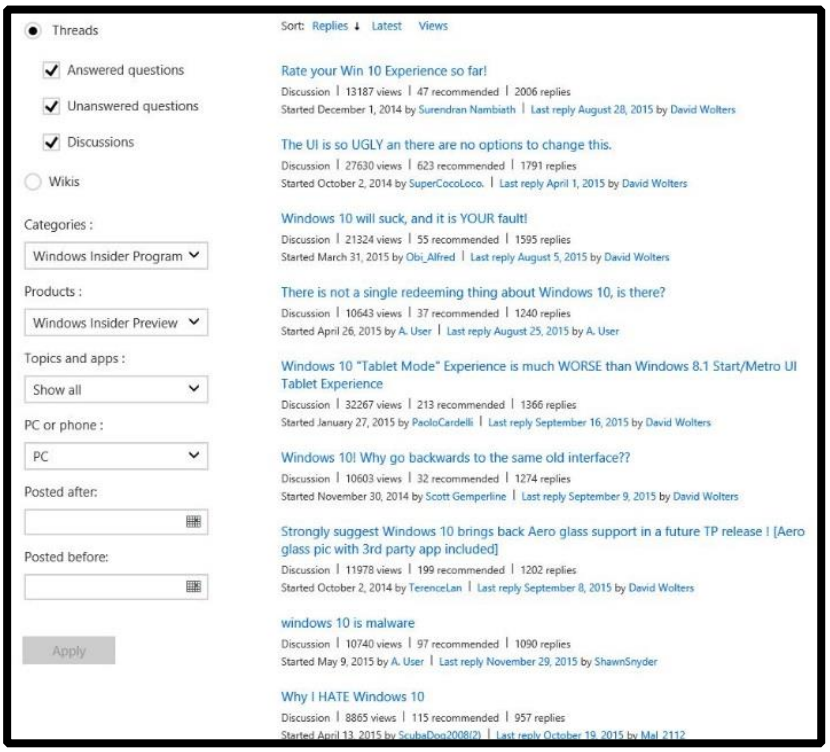
By That much

Windows 7 users and even the robots knew they missed it:

By This much

This thread generated 800 plus messages, and became a collaboration of the best ideas from the most disappointed testers using the Insider forum. Lefty consolidated these ideas and posted the list to the Feedback App.

The most trafficked message threads involve more than 1000 messages each, including those closed by the moderators. They included discussions primarily about the interface, features, and configuration. They discussed what Windows 10 is now and what it should be, consistent with the MS outlined goals of the Insider Program.



Eight or nine months into the testing the software builds or flights as MS called them, someone on the forum ended a message in I do *NOT* like Windows 10! This triggered Lefty's inner Seuss, and he posted a poem, which probably contributed,

to his first banishment to A.User status in the forum.[10] This also reminded him of a movie he once saw.[11]

The target environment being too rich and he could not help himself. Old enough to know better, but too young to resist was his excuse.

I do *NOT* like Windows 10!

Would you like it here or there?
I would not like it here or there.
I would not like it anywhere.
I do not like Windows 10
I do not like it, A.User-I-am
Would you like it in your house? Could you use it with a mouse?
I do not like it in my house. I cannot use it with a mouse.
I do not like it here or there. I do not like it anywhere.
I do not like Windows 10 I do not like it, A.User-I-am.
Would you use it in your home box? Would you use it in your work box?
Not in my home box. Not in my work box.
Not in my house. Not with a mouse.
I would not use it here or there. I would not use it anywhere.
I would not use Windows 10. I do not like it, A.User-I-am.
Would you? Could you? Use it in your car?
I would not, could not, use it in my car
You may like it. You will see.
Not in my car! You let me be.
I do not like it in my home box. I do not like it in my work box
I do not like it in my house I cannot use it with a mouse
I do not like it here or there. I do not like it anywhere.
I do not like Windows 10.
I do not like it, A.User-I-am.
A train! A train!
Could you? Would you? on a train?
Not on a train! Not in a car!
I would not, could not, in my home box. I could not, would not, in my work box.

---

[10] *When a user was banned, their profile was blocked, and the forum software automatically changed the profile username to A.User (read as A dot User) in all their future and previous message posts.*

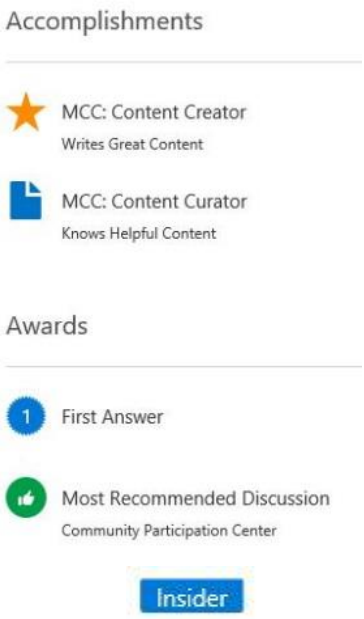
[11] *Disclosure is a film where the protagonist receives an e-mail from someone identified only as "A Friend."*

I cannot use it with a mouse I will not use it in my house.
I will not use it here or there. I will not use it anywhere.
I do not like it, A.User-I-am.
Say! In a park? Here in the park! Would you? Could you? Use it in a park?
I would not, could not, in a park.
Not in a park. Not on a train.
Not in my car, I do not like it, you see!
Not in my house. Not in my home box.
Not with a mouse. Not in my work box.
I will not use it here or there. I do not like it anywhere!
You do not like Windows 10?
I do not like it, A.User-I-am!
Could you? Would you? on a float?
I would not, could not, on a float!
Would you? Could you? on a boat?
I could not, would not, on a boat!
I will not, will not, use it on a float or a boat!
I will not use it in the rain. I will not use it on a train.
Not in a car! You let me be!
I do not like it in my home box. I do not like it in my work box.
I will not use it in my house. I cannot use it with a mouse.
I do not like it here or there. I do not like it ANYWHERE!
I do not like Windows 10!
I do not like it, A.User-I-am.
You do not like it. So you say.
Try it! Try it! And you may.
If you will let me be, I will try it again.
I do so not like Windows 10!
No Thank you! No Thank you!
A.User-I-am!

This dedicated core of experienced users would attempt to guide the development of Windows 10 in the direction they needed for their future business use, personal productivity, and entertainment. They talked among themselves, argued, educated each other, told war stories and jokes, and refined their thinking. They posted ideas and problems to the Feedback site, when this app worked. They dealt with being interrupted, threatened, and attempted deflections by moderators and

fanbois.[12] They challenged unsupported claims regarding the wonderfulness of Windows 10; they posted test data and screen shots supporting their arguments. They asked the same from all those who posted, that they support their arguments with facts or data. All they got, was the sound of crickets from the fanbois, and banishment from the moderators.

Along the way, Lefty and the others earned forum badges, or awards, for being conversational and helpful to other users. First, the Conversationalist badge, followed by the First Answer badge, Content Creator, Most Recommended Discussion, and finally the Insider badge.

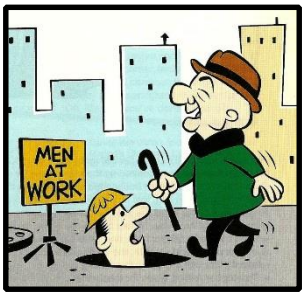


Lefty received a homemade badge from another forum member for use in his forum profile.

[12] *Fanboy, or fanbois, are people who are overly enthusiastic fans of something. It is typically not used as a complementary term.*

The inexperienced users and the fanbois posted opinions about not judging this product until completely done. The experienced users knew better, and Lefty used Dilbert to deliver his point and taking a non-subtle shot at a clueless moderator.

Microsoft's Mr. Magoo[13] like shortsighted vision was also pointed out graphically.

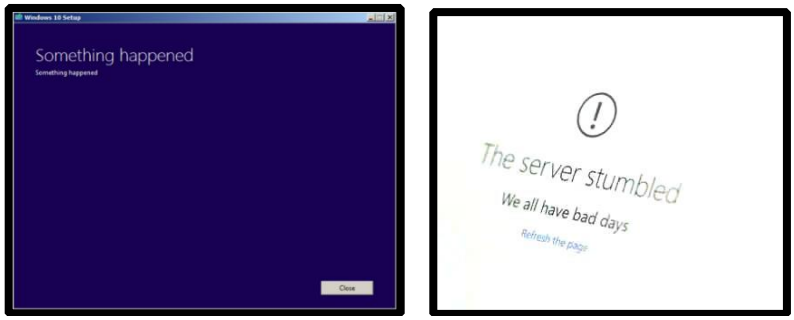


The give and take in these forums, challenged, and inspired Lefty. The breadth and depth of the experienced posters knowledge far surpassed anything he experienced previously in the forums for prior Windows versions, dating back to Windows 95. These users were a mix of software developers, hardware builders, computer shop owners, bench technicians, company IT administrators, technicians, hobbyists, and retirees. The Insider Program had successfully attracted a wide range of experience and knowledge. This was just as Microsoft had wished for, but then they squandered the opportunity by refusing to listen. As

[13] *The cartoon character Mr. Magoo is a wealthy, short-statured retiree who gets into a series of comical situations as a result of his extreme near-sightedness, compounded by his stubborn refusal to admit the problem.*

with Windows 8, they pushed back against any contrary ideas claiming they knew best. Despite their later public acknowledgements of what a technical and marketing disaster Windows 8 had become, they nonetheless pressed on.

The experienced users were *incensed* by the newest breed of error messages, which did nothing to give any of the previously provided clues or information for troubleshooting.



The new direction of error messages

In the Windows 8 forums back in 2012, MS so aggressively pushed back against any kind of dissent that many experienced users like Lefty finally departed. They had finally conceded that MS continued to give them good products since before 1990, and must know what they are doing. That mistake everyone suffered from, principally MS, now having a worldwide market share in the single digits five years later. This could not be allowed to happen again, this time. The criticism and pushback accelerated to the point where users, and at least one fanboy and moderator or Mod, were banished from the forum.

These Insiders, who were involved in computers for a long time, were obviously unafraid to embrace change. Their computer lives mirrored this constant change for decades. They did not and could not financially afford to hold any motivations other than success, for both MS and themselves.

The primary issues of experienced users:

1. *Loss of user configuration*
2. *Loss of interface clarity and usability*
3. *Loss of control over system actions and defaults*
4. *Loss of system utilities*

Their consensus on these issues revealed that this version represented a serious degradation in the usability of the OS. They believed they clearly understood, and effusively disagreed with the motivations of Microsoft. They also clearly understood what had been available to them for many decades, and what they needed from an OS now and into the future.

When these two things aligned, what MS wanted and what the users needed, they did well and MS did well. These things spun out of alignment a few years back with Windows 8 and in their view, continued down the wrong path.

End-user control, over if and when updates are installed, remained a serious issue to most forum members; they felt betrayed and disrespected, and then Dilbert made another appearance.

Insiders parodied the group Anonymous in their messages.

WE WHO HATE WINDOWS 8.x & 10
We are the WINDOWS GURUS
We are the CUSTOMERS
We do not FORGIVE
We do not FORGET
Expect US!

We are the geeks who helped build the Internet
We make things work for clueless users
We understand ipconfig
We are vocal when we are right
We can be deflected
We cannot be deterred
At the Win10 launch party, DON'T EXPECT US!

One Insider wrote a short story about the trials and tribulations of the Insider beta testing process. Reading this inspired Lefty to post the first of what would become a dozen stories by the fall of the second year. These stories would serve the Insiders as a stress relief and distraction from the frustration of watching the product evolve, or in reality, devolve. He also used these stories as an opportunity to present ideas for discussion of what should have and could have been, in a technically descriptive and occasionally humorous story form.

Insider Story 1

A few months ago, my fiancé and I drove to Niagara Falls from Wisconsin, to be married and honeymoon. We stopped to rest overnight at a Lansing, MI motel, and I later left alone to retrieve our takeout dinners. When I returned, parking in the hotel underground parking garage, out from behind one roof support pillar I thought I heard a PSST! I continued walking toward our room and then I heard the sound again, PSST!, PSST!. I finally walked over to the sound and to my surprise, out stepped Flint, Michigan's own award winning film director, Michael Moore. He thought the hiding subterfuge necessary as he was convinced he was under surveillance by the NSA due to his edgy documentary movies.

Moore knew he could find me there, as Flint was a sister city to the one where I was working. I requested via email if we could meet to discuss a computer refurbishing operation there, as I was passing through the area. My vehicle was also hard for him to miss.

I offered "Hi ya Mike", and in a low raspy voice, he whispered, "I have a scoop for you. Dave Cutler is running a two billion dollar skunk works project for Microsoft back here in his hometown. If you are interested you have your choice of these", reaching out his hand containing a blue pill and a red pill. I took and swallowed the red one.[14]

[14] *The red pill and its opposite the blue pill, are popular cultural symbols representing the choice between embracing the sometimes-painful truth of reality (red pill) and the blissful ignorance of illusion (blue pill).*

Next thing I knew as if in a dream, I was at State Fair Park inside the Milwaukee Mile racetrack crew area watching the race. Sitting next to me is none other than Cutler himself intently watching the race. I recalled reading that Cutler was also a racer and he was now telling me he co-owned one of the cars we watched. I found myself asking him about the article published a few years ago about him working on the Xbox gaming system for Microsoft. He offered that this was a head fake by MS to mask the real truth. The truth is the real money isn't found in Xbox or mobile software or in user content consumption. "The real money has always and will always come from putting Windows inside all devices, designed as the very best for each device. This is what makes people productive and Microsoft rich," he continued.

You see what MS is showing you now with the Windows 10TP or Technical Preview, will be called the Mobile version. They won't make that mistake again; they learned their lesson because of Windows 8. He continued, "I was charged by Nadella himself, with building on the Windows NT success to build the greatest operating system ever. What you will have will be more beautiful, powerful, and fully featured than any OS ever before, just as Windows NT was derived from Digital's VMS back in its day."

He continued, "You know at MS we made a lot of promises over the years with Cairo, Longhorn, and Blackcomb that we never kept. This time, this one, will be beautiful and have an almost holographic appearance on the new 4k high-resolution screens. You will have a powerful relational file system, more granular control over the interface, and over how software runs. You will have additional control over how hardware interfaces, and how updating is done, than you ever have before. This non- mobile version includes all the great things, which we mistakenly took out over the years after Windows 98, plus a new Media Center program, and optical drive authoring improvements. You will also have enhanced security you don't need to worry about, and has tools for keeping the NSA and everyone else out of your computer and your computer network."

> "Wow, I am glad I picked the red pill," I exclaimed. He instructed, "Now go and tell everyone on the Insider forums that all is not lost". *To be continued…*

The Insiders reception to his story was positive, getting many Likes on the post.

The pushback came first from the forum mods, issuing warnings about not straying from the topic of the thread. This was at best a subjective thing, based on thread titles and forum rules. Users who complained were warned about banishment. The first to go was JNC (aka Cool Hand),[15] who was banned for 30 days for embarrassing a moderator, Drew1903, about how wrong he was, when the mod failed to provide any evidence backing his claims. A message thread was created by an Insider titled "An old fashioned wake", where the discussion centered on how wrong his banishment was. He came back after thirty days, to the welcomes and cheers of many, apparently further embarrassing the moderators. He was hastily banned again, this time for good, for the use of a harmless adjective describing his view of the Windows 10 interface.

Meantime, Lefty penned another discussion thread.

> ***What are the features in Win10 that will make us leave our Win7 or Win8 homes for this newest collection of bits?***
>
> *Conditions are as follows:*
>
> - *Must not be something that already existed in previous operating systems.*
> - *Must not be aspirational, must be real.*
>
> *What would a top ten list look like?*

[15] *Cool Hand Luke, is a prison drama film where Luke is a prisoner in a Florida prison camp who refuses to submit to the system. He was arrested and sentenced for flaunting authority by cutting the "heads" off the main street parking meters with a pipe cutter on one drunken night.*

Cool Hand Reply

Wow, looks like I'm unbanned. Thanks, Drew, for facilitating some time off from the stress of dealing with some of the silliness here.

I've been striving to find a nugget of goodness, and frankly, I've had a lot of trouble doing so. Part of it is MY FAULT because I'm really just not interested in the new things Microsoft is doing with Windows. I'd like to continue to use it as a general purpose, business-oriented computing platform.

As such, it's impossible to name much of anything that isn't aspirational. So I'm afraid I'll have to break your first condition, Lefty.

My perspective is that I need a desktop-centric, serious work-oriented workstation. It's what I have now with Win 8.1 x64 MCE, and before that with 7 Ultimate, Vista Ultimate, XP x64, 2000, NT, and all the DOS-based systems before that.

For much of a week now I've been working with Windows 10 in a fully immersive (VM, but full-screen across all my monitors) environment, with UAC disabled (not just the slider, but EnableLUA set to 0). UAC is still every bit the poor implementation of a questionable idea it ever was, and now (since Win 8) unfortunately it's a requirement to run any, of what they are calling Metro/Modern/Universal/Windows Apps.

As an aside, I had been happy to make the switch to calling Apps "Modern", but Microsoft continues to allow their Marketing people to change the name to spread more FUD, and that's just stupid so I will call them "Metrotard Apps" henceforth.

It's taken an unprecedented effort to return my Windows 10 desktop experience to being as productive and elegant as it was with Win 8.1, but I've done it. I have resurrected Aero Glass so it's elegant looking, I've got it all working without UAC and without the stupid "you need to provide confirmation" or "you can't do that" pop-ups. If Microsoft doesn't change anything else, I can probably make the transition to Windows 10.

Here are my thoughts (and I'm sorry that much of this is aspirational) on considering an upgrade to Win 10 as an advantage.

Assuming you can bring yourself to trust Microsoft to actually improve your working environment - rather than continue to degrade it as so many of the recent changes seem to have done - it could be said to be an advantage just to keep current. For me it's been true up through Win 8.1, despite Microsoft's many bad decisions. My current Win 8.1 working environment, while not radically better than I had it in Win 7, is actually subtly better. I rather like Windows 8.1. Did I just say that?

It's possible that through Windows Update Microsoft will try to "stick it to" the holdouts who insist on continuing to run older operating systems. It's not hard to imagine performance degradations being introduced into the older systems "in the name of security", and in fact I believe I already have detected evidence of that. You can't have too much security, right? Thus Win 10 will probably ultimately end up being the best performing-though it is not YET faster than Win 7 by the measures I have taken.

Some old and cranky desktop applications I've tested actually seem to be a little more functional with Win 10 then they did with Win 8.1. Not that I use it regularly, but in testing I've found Office 2003, for example, does NOT exhibit some of the problems it had in Win 8.1. An ancient code editor I still occasionally fire up actually works its file dialogs better in Win 10 than it did in 8.1. If you have a critical application for 7 that you need to be able to continue to use, where Win 8.x could not support it it's possible Win 10 will. I'm sure Microsoft is keen to lower barriers to Windows 7 users. Windows 10 seems quite compatible with existing desktop applications.

I guess we can assume, much as with Windows 8, that device makers will begin to concentrate their development and testing primarily on Windows 10. That means that gradually, things like display drivers will be the most stable and functional on Windows 10 (especially with the emphasis on gaming). Up to date hardware support is an advantage to keeping current. New hardware off the shelf will likely have Windows 10 on it.

Frankly, with Microsoft giving away this update, I imagine quite a lot of users will move to Windows 10 (either intentionally or be tricked and dragged along). I can't imagine too many desktop users who already use Win 8.1 will avoid upgrading. The more successful Win 10 is, the more focus it will have, and the more keeping current will be an advantage.

Windows 10 seems pretty stable already where it counts (kernel strength and file system access) - which isn't really a surprise since Microsoft is doing very little to the underlying code. But then Win 8.1 and before that 7, and before that Vista were perfectly stable (for me at least). This is not really an advantage Win 10 brings, per se, but it's not an easy disqualifier either.

Metrotard Apps have always held fairly little interest from me, though I've been thinking it'd be nice if I could gain the ability to try them occasionally. That just wasn't going to happen when they were limited to full-screen operation ONLY with 8.x. And so it seems like Windows 10, with its windowed App capability, could make using Apps more a possibility, BUT... They just don't work with UAC[16] *disabled. Of the two, FOR ME, UAC being off is more important.*

There were times I missed seeing notifications in Win 8.x and earlier. I did go so far as to find and lengthen the default "fade out" time, but there were still things I would miss. The new notification center, with its accumulating list, is kind of nice to have. Of course, it needs to be made fully functional, which it isn't yet (there are still often times I click on a notification and nothing happens). I suspect they'll have it working by release.

It looks like Microsoft - though they're doing their darnest to hide it - will be retaining the ability to work with a local account. This is something that could completely disqualify Win 10 for many people (supposed advantages to "cloud" operation notwithstanding). Doesn't look like it will.

Seems problematic when we keep having to dredge up "well, they didn't break this and they didn't remove that" in lists of reasons to adopt the new system, eh?

Dean Wormer to Kent "Flounder" Dorfman, "Fat, drunk, and stupid is no way to go through life, son". From the movie Animal House.

---

[16] *User Account Control or UAC, is a security infrastructure technology introduced in MS Windows. Its aim is to improve the security of the operating system by limiting application software to standard user privileges until the administrator specifically authorizes an increase or elevation in these privileges.*

Second banning:

"Metrotard Apps"[17]

David (moderator)

If you use an offensive phrase like that, you will not be back for long...

Cool Hand Reply

I find that offensively threatening, frankly.

YOU can push offensively poor Apps on US, but WE cannot call them what they are nor report them (or your ridiculous marketing practices) as offensive to YOU. Is that about it? And here I thought this was one of the places to provide honest feedback. My bad.

It seems like this was extrapolated from the solid effluent of a biological exhaust port. (Seen on the Internet)

Time for a few more stories to lighten the mood and cheer us up, Lefty thought.

[17] *Metrotard according to the urban dictionary, are people in front of you at the subway turnstile who cannot figure out how to swipe their subway pass. Or any person who tries to use a Metro card to withdraw money from an ATM.*

Insider Story 10

Earlier today as I read messages, answered questions, and responded to snarky trolls in the Windows TP forum, a message notification popped up displaying a private message from the forum moderator. "Click to acknowledge" the message read, and when I did my screen flashed to a dark and apparently private part of the forum called futureblog.windows.com, according to my web browser address bar.

An animated holographic avatar appeared on my screen who introduced himself as Dave Cutler of Microsoft. He explained that I had been visually transported into this virtual world inside an old abandoned GM car factory near Flint, MI. "Here in this 500,000 sq. ft. lab, we are creating technologies that are up to fifteen years out into the future", he explained.

As I used my mouse to walk my own on-screen avatar deeper into the lab, I saw a large number of workstations and engineers working on various types of projects. Large thumb-drive type devices stuck out of the backside of the monitors. When I moved in for a closer view, Dave explained that these Intel Compute Sticks used Intel Core I9 128-bit processors; each having 32 processor cores and a 256 GB main memory micro SD chip. They also contained a 128 GB video memory micro SD chip, and plugged into HDMI version 6 ports into each of the three 34 inch curved LCD monitors. These compute sticks, were parallel connected via a 10 GB wireless connection, provide each 7680 x 4320-resolution monitor having its own GPU processor, toggled by using keyboard function keys. These screens looked to be about 4mm thick and displayed an edge-to-edge image. The compute stick units were connected to the Internet using a 1Gb WI-FI version 802.11w wireless connection.

This must be the feeling Bill Gates had when he first toured Xerox PARC[18], I thought.

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[18] The Xerox California Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) invented most of the major personal computer technologies like the GUI, mouse, laser printer, word processing, and networking technologies.

Upon closer examination, I saw Bluetooth keyboards paired wirelessly to the sticks. "Bluetooth 8.0", Dave offered. He continued, "Using Bluetooth 8.0, you have better battery life and a more reliable connection to its paired device. Both the mouse and keyboard also have a small LED indicator that tells you when battery power is low."

Next to the keyboard, there was a laser mouse. I used my avatar to pick it up, and Dave continued, "The mouse is compact and small with tracking that's powered with 16,400 DPI technology and combines the power of optical and the precision of laser for use on most any surface. The mouse's design is also ambidextrous and can run for many years without replacing the rechargeable lithium ion battery.

I questioned him about the computer operating system. Dave then introduced me to the avatar of Mark Lucovsky who expressed his thoughts. "What we know for sure here is good user interfaces are crucial for good user experiences. It really doesn't matter how good a technology is; if we designers don't provide a user interface as intuitive and attractive as possible, the technology will hardly reach a breakthrough point. To gain interest in a product or technology, users need to recognize its advantages or find themselves impressed or involved with the technology in some way."

He continued, "Over decades we've adapted our habits, behavior, and mindset to technology. We've improved our productivity using tools and devices designed specifically for tasks completed frequently. However, we've also constrained our abilities to the features of those very tools and devices we've become dependent on."

I mentioned that I didn't notice any voice, touch, or gesture controls on these units, and Mark replied, "We've gotten used to any number of things, like the traditional mouse-keyboard user interaction, and a 2D windows-based user interface having a rather unspectacular user workflow. This enables the user to interact with only one application at a time. For instance, while you're browsing the web using your browser software you can't scale your text and resize

your window simultaneously, unless you are a keyboard-shortcut-master."

"The reason why 3D desktops never took off, other than doing transitions to switch windows in Vista and Windows 7, is because little is wrong with the way things are now. Xerox PARC got this *spot-on* and that's why it's changed little after day one. When the time comes to perform real work, particularly if the work involves multitasking, the PC is still king and always will be."

I further interrogated him about Internet connectivity, the cloud, and the unusual web pages being displayed on the screens there. Mark opined, "even when most of us use 1000 Mb broadband, local storage will remain faster and more secure than a remote drive on someone else's network. If you are running large programs like games or professional-grade audio or video-editing software, you'll want them on your own PC's storage drive. Also, even in 2030, there will be plenty of places where Internet access is unavailable or unreliable.

"We improved our version of Wi-Fi to stream video to our notebooks, tablets, and phones, and to our home theaters via DLNA, WI-DI, or Miracast. We also use Wi-Fi Direct now, which allows sharing files directly between devices, without needing a network router.[19] This is what connects the compute sticks to each other here."

He continued "we also stopped dividing websites up into pages, because dynamic content refreshes eliminated the need to load an entirely new URL for each screen of online content. However, HTML, which has been the language of the Web from 1991 on, will remain the format we use to build the online applications and publications of the future. We are programming in HTML 8, and the World Wide Web will continue to be programmed with some form of this computer language."

When I queried him about the computer file system, Mark sent me back to Dave's avatar. "We are using WinFS, which MS gave up as *too hard* to do about a decade ago," he noted. "WinFS includes a relational

[19] *A router is a network device that forwards data packets between computer networks.*

file system for information storage, and allows any type of information to be stored within it. WinFS natively recognizes different types of data, such as picture, e-mail, document, audio or video file, calendar, or a contact, as a Schema[20]. The file system also organizes the data by file type within Stores, rather than leaving them as raw unanalyzed byte streams, as the current NTFS file system does. The NTFS file system used in the current versions of Microsoft Windows, stores files and other objects as a byte stream, and includes little or no information about the data stored inside these files. Such file systems only provide a single way to organize the files, namely using directory folders and file names with their three character extensions."

"WinFS as a default allows for any application software program to use schemas to discover the data structure, and utilize this file information. The program developers of any program such as a media player or calendar program will not need to learn anything new or write their code any differently due to WinFS."

He continued, "For example, let's say you want to do a rather complex search for the phone numbers of people who appear at least ten times within your photo collection and with whom you have had email communication at least twice. NTFS cannot do that but thanks to metadata, WinFS can."

"Because the NTFS file system has no knowledge about the data stored, application software programs need to use their own proprietary file formats. This hampers data sharing between multiple software application programs. It becomes difficult to create an application which processes information from multiple file types, because the programmers need to comprehend the structure and file semantics. One workaround is to use common file formats, but this isn't a universal solution as there is no guarantee all applications will use this format. Data with a standardized model, such as XML web based documents and relational data fare better, as they use

[20] *The term "schema" refers to the blueprint of how the database is constructed and divided into database tables.*

a standardized structure and run-time software requirements."

"A better solution is tagging files with attributes which describe them. Attributes are metadata[21] about files such as the file type as a document, picture, or music, of the content and the creator, etc. This allows files to be searched for by their attributes, in ways impossible using a folder hierarchy, such as find "pictures which include person X". These attributes are recognizable by the file system either natively, or via a software extension. Desktop search applications move this concept a step further. They extract data, which include its attributes, from files for indexing, and then a filter is used for each file format to be able to extract the data. This allows you to run a search based on both the file's attributes and also on the data within the files."

"However, this still doesn't help manage related data as disparate items and will have no relationships defined. WinFS now provides this data model and the runtime infrastructure stores the data, as well as the relationships between data items in accordance with the data model. WinFS does this right now at a satisfactory performance level."

"You can work across application boundaries to get your work done. You can observe relationships across your data you wouldn't see before. You can discover things that appear out of reach and connect them. Imagine using the data organization from one application to help explore another."

Wow, I exclaimed, "Thanks Dave for the impressive tutorial on file systems, and Mark on what you guys are doing here. We hope to see the benefits of your work in Windows 10."

With that, my screen flashed and I was back in the TP forum viewing some newbie users post about how wonderful the flat colored tiles looked in the Metro interface. Sheesh! Time to log off and do something else, I thought.

[21] *Metadata is data which provides information about other data.*

The Insider's positive reaction motivated Lefty to continue to ramp up the *attitude* of these stories and post another one.

Insider Story 11

Just the other day, it was just the other day, I was installing the newest Win10TP build version from a downloaded .iso file, and I suddenly noticed a new installation screen. Something quickly flashed on my screen regarding WinPE[22] and probed if I wanted an Express or Custom install.

Under the Express button, the text explained that if you are unsure which to select, choose this option and we try our best to determine the software components that are best for your particular device.

Under the Custom install button, the text explained that this option would allow user selection of which software modules are installed.

Below that, the screen explained that these modules allowed later addition or removal via the Control Panel Installation icon. Don't concern yourself with this, right now.

Wow, reminds me of server roles in the Windows server software, I thought.

I chose the Custom install option, and was presented with a series of questions.

Type of device you installing on: (check the boxes that apply)

Tablet

- ☐ Large screen 9-12 inch
- ☐ Small screen 6-8 inch

Traditional Mobile

- ☐ Clamshell non-touch screen laptop
- ☐ 2 in 1, or convertible with touch screen

Non-mobile

- ☐ Desktop, tower, mini, or SFF PC

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[22] *Windows Preinstallation Environment or Win PE is a lightweight version of Windows used for the deployment of PCs, workstations, and servers, or troubleshooting an operating system while it is offline.*

- ☐ All-in-One

Which menu interface would you like?

- ☐ Classic (icons)
- ☐ Metro (tiles)

Which icon appearance would you like?

- ☐ Two dimensional icons, Aero Glass
- ☐ One dimensional flat tiles

System Fonts

- ☐ Basic font pack (requires 200 MB disk space)
- ☐ Full font pack (requires 600 MB disk space)

Which file system would you like?

- ☐ NTFS (legacy-recommended)
- ☐ WINFS (advanced-may impact backward compatibility of your files)

Your data files backup (we will transfer your files to this location)

Indicate the drive letter or UNC path name for us to locate your files. *Computer drive letter :\ or \\server\user\path*

Check those that apply.

- ☐ Documents
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Photos
- ☐ Videos
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Contacts
- ☐ Calendar
- ☐ Projects

Software

- ☐ Office productivity
  - Install MS Office
  - Install Visio
- ☐ Media productivity
  - Install Movie Maker
  - Install Media Center
- ☐ Programming productivity
  - Install Visual Studio
- ☐ Install Modern apps, i.e. Weather, News, etc.

At the page bottom it explained some modules require additional licensing. After 60 days you need to obtain licensing or uninstall these modules.

The screen then presented a number of windows indicating the installation progress of the interface elements and software programs, and when done automatically rebooted itself.

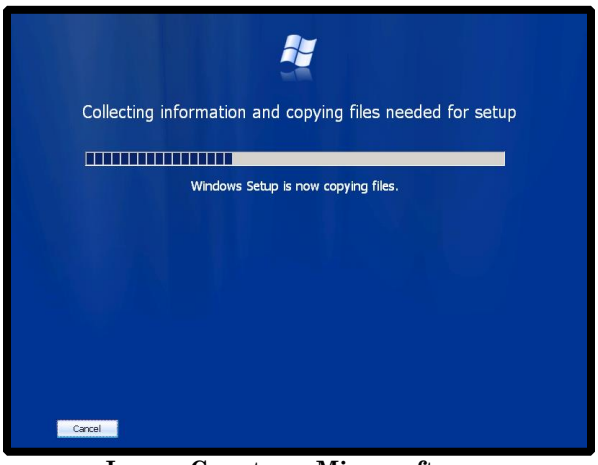
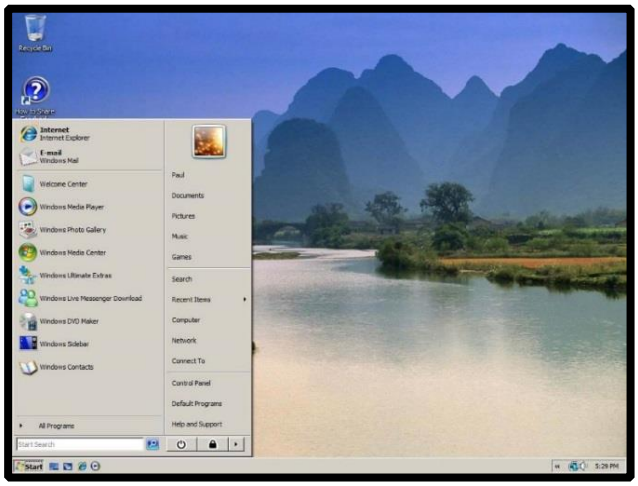


Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

On reboot, my screen showed the selected preferences and displayed exactly as expected. The desktop displayed the classic user interface, and the Aero Glass elements.



The Classic Start Menu and Task Bar

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

There were no windows or tiles to swipe through, or folders to drill into, only a single click to follow the cascading menus to where you wanted.

There was translucency and clearly defined program icons, which displayed the programs loaded into memory complete with descriptions.

The themed wallpaper was wrong for me, and I selected a theme of alternating lighter colors for wallpaper and folder backgrounds.

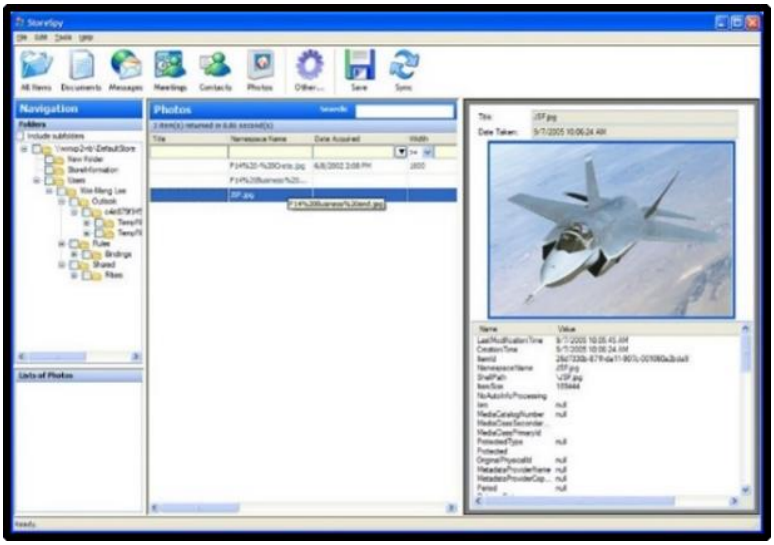
When I pulled up a word processor document, the font renderings displayed on my 4k screens as near perfect. This reminded me of display postscript on the NeXT computers of the olden days, except now with a color display and there now appeared to be automatic font kerning.[23] The typefaces were beautifully displayed on screen, having a precise clarity.

When I opened my data folder, the beautiful 3D icons contained thumbnails of the files in their folders, and the clarity of the universal picture icons made the text descriptions unnecessary.

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

[23] *Kerning is a technique used for printing and displaying text, to set specific combinations of adjoining characters closer together for improved appearance by removing some space between them.*

Once the file conversion was completed, WinFS displayed a StoreSpy window. This screen explained that StoreSpy was a WinFS item browser used for browsing structured data instances, including their properties and relationships.



The StoreSpy screen Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

I opened my photos folder and a message requested my decision on if I wanted to convert these files into a relational database. I clicked on OK and then a process began indexing, sorting and connecting my documents, videos, music, pictures, and drawings. Then it put them into folders based on associations and relationships, It opened a folder to display the results.

WinFS sorted photos Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

The screen also explained that the files now included tagged attributes, or metadata, which describe them. This included file type; document, picture, music, and creator now in one unified data store.

The screen indicated that the desktop Start Menu search application would now use a selectable filter for each file format to extract the data, including file attributes, and then index them. This allows searches based on both the file's attributes and the data contained within the files.

WinFS file presentation Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

The calendar application sorted images by dates and used their relationship with your contacts to filter the images, because of the shared schema system.

I opened a program to read my email, and what was presented was clear, concise, and beautiful. Not only 3D in appearance, but I could manipulate the windows on all axis's. This allowed for moving the windows forward, back, side to side, anywhere on the screen desktop.

Mail messages Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

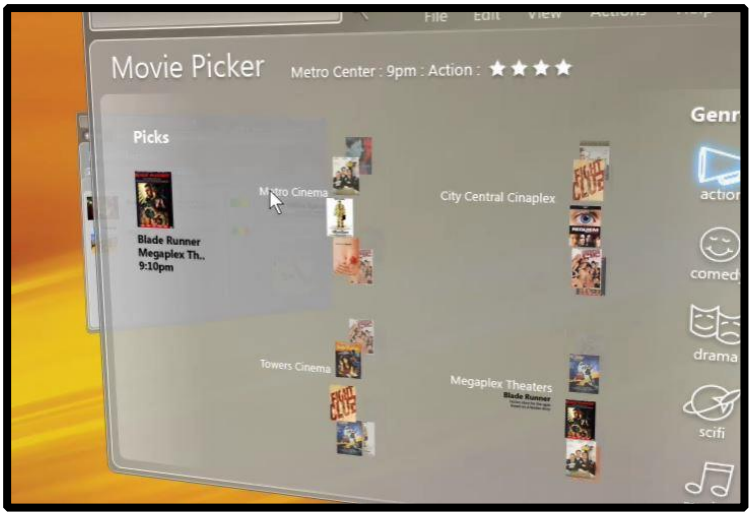
What about my Calendar I thought, wow not only beautiful, but perfect as well.

The Calendar Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

How do my Contacts look? Again, totally awesome.

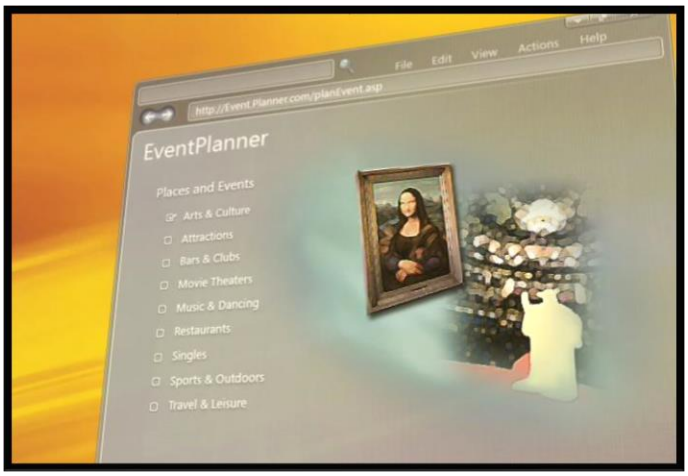
My Contacts Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

This will dramatically increase my productivity, I thought. Maybe I have time to see a movie tonight, so I fired up the built-in Internet web viewer to select a show, theater, and show time.



My Movie Picker Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

Oh heck! I just remembered I was supposed to plan a meeting event for my team tomorrow. Ok, back to the web to swiftly knock this job out.



My Event Planner Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

Well, we need to eat as well, so I picked out a restaurant with a meeting room.

My Event Planner Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

Yes, Bada Lounge seems like the right place, serving good old-fashioned American food. I'll use my local contacts to create invites. I can see that the invitee's have indicated their preferences.

OK, back to movie selection now. Perhaps Homeland or maybe Veep?

Right then I was jolted from the sound of an incoming email, awaking me from what apparently was a daydream.

As I reflected on the experience of my dream, "Oh my, what could have been!" I screamed.

Then I got up out of my chair, plugged a Johnny Cash cd into the stereo, walked over to the fridge, cracked open a MGD, and cried in my beer.

To be continued…

Additional user bans came next, back in the Insider forum. CDMiller was next to be kicked out, followed by preferreduser and then LArduci. The next week another was lost, this time a gal using a handle of amimizio. Users dropped like flies now but after each banishment, another user would step up and assume the mantel, as in a game of Whack-a-Mole. These dedicated customers of MS for decades, relied on MS to maintain and run their businesses or the business where they worked. They beta tested software and provided input to make MS products better since Win95. This time they were unwilling to leave quietly as they did in the Win8 forums, only to watch a disaster play out in front of their eyes. That disaster cost them both time and money. They persisted hoping without any hope, that MS would do an about face. He had never seen a corporations paying customers display such loyalty and genuine concern for a product.

A few posts got CDMiller banned.

This is what I know. These two Kb's[24]*,* ***KB2952664 and KB 3035583*** *are ALL about putting Win10 on your machine later on this year via Windows Update or WU..*

When these updates were pushed out they were "optional" box un checked.

If you DID NOT install them, WU will continue to offer them endlessly until you hide them.

Some people DID install them. They can be uninstalled of course. Uninstalling both of them is a good idea if you have no intention of upgrading to WIN10 this fall).

Here is the point I'm trying to get across:

Once you Uninstall these "optional" updates, WU will push them as "IMPORTANT" updates with the boxes pre-checked. This will fool a lot of people into installing them because they

[24] KB numbers refer to Microsoft Knowledge Base Numbers, which are online documents which explain various problem fixes and updates.

think they are security/functionality system updates. ABSOLUTELY NOT TRUE.

MS is purposely being vague about all of this and anyone paying attention can see that They really do have an agenda, get as many pc's on win10 as possible in the next year or so. If win10 really was so fantastic (and we know it's not) then they would need no tricks like this.

"The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." Albert Einstein

A few posts got Amii banned.

ok so I get that it could be offensive to someone with a mental handicap as it uses a derivative of the offensive word retard. so how about METROTURD APPS or METRO crAPPS? Note: my issue here is with the censorship and abuse of authority and not metro itself although im not fond of it either.

"The more you tighten your grip, Tarkin, the more star systems will slip through your fingers." --Princess Leia

The mods banned Bob Vincent for this:

Users aren't abandoning Microsoft, Microsoft is abandoning its users.

It used to be that we measured consumer loyalty to brands, but in this case the measure is the brand's loyalty to its users, and by that measure it's a zero.

1.5 billion desktop users are left without a useful desktop. 300 million touch users are left without a useful touch UI

The entire business and government infrastructure that relies on Microsoft Windows to get things done, are having it replaced by an operating system that encourages intrusive clickbait, passive content consumption, or mindless game playing. They may call it Windows 10 Professional but it seems like Windows 10 ad-supported apptoystore.

"Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity." Martin Luther King Jr.

Insider bigjohn-s was the next banishment for this message.

What the majority wants, is not "backwards". Most people want progress and advancement, however not all change is forward. In the case of Windows 10, it's not an advancement, it's a sell-out.

Microsoft has changed their revenue model. They are no longer interested in selling software useful for people to conduct their own computing needs. Instead, Windows 10 is designed to monetize its customers to generate revenue. Windows 10 is a "free" storefront for:

Cortana/Bing sponsored clickbait (just like Google)

Microsoft/Windows/Metro/Universal Appstore sales (like Apple)

Xbox integration to spur sales of Xbox and Xbox software (like Sony Playstation)

Software subscriptions, e.g. music, OneDrive, office 365

Data mining of personal information to sell (like Facebook)

Microsoft thinks that by making the desktop computer act like a phone, it will make people want Windows phones. The new "start menu" on the Windows 10 desktop is taken directly from Windows 8 phone - I played with a windows phone last night and it had the same one column list of "apps", and tiles that Windows 10 has.

Another thing they are doing is saving money by firing software testers and using Windows 10 consumers as testers for Windows Updates before they roll out to paying corporate/enterprise customers.

The people in charge of Windows Desktop, are the people who developed Windows Phone, and they are no longer involving Windows Desktop leadership.

It's interesting that you dislike the mac - I dislike it too, for the same reasons you do, and in my opinion Microsoft is moving Windows in the Mac direction, which is not forward.

We can only find the solutions, if we can agree on the magnitude of the problems and the importance and significance of the efforts to solve them. - Heard on the Internet

After negative reactions from the press, computer users, and some corporate IT departments, MS became more sensitive to criticism, and the forum moderators now began editing, and deleting messages. They also started to lock message threads and continued to ban selected users from the forums.

The Mods now being wholly corrupted, MS now was apparently also importing fanbois, shills, and trolls to obfuscate, derail, hijack, and steer discussions in more favorable ways.

Locutus deBorg was the next to be banned for this post:

Some people think that we're supposed to be the "vocal minority", and when reality hits and it stops appearing that way, there's a sure way to "bring things back to normalcy": Ban us. It is interesting (and very disturbing) how I have never seen a single Metro proponent get banned, and several of them have been far more obnoxious than some those of us that have been banned. This is so wrong. Microsoft is specifically discriminating against our brightest stars, people who they should be paying the most attention to instead of silencing.

Microsoft, I am closely watching just to how you're paying attention to our feedback as you promised. Why are basic bug reports like this one, introduced in Windows Vista, STILL not fixed? You promised to listen to our feedback, and yet Aero Glass, by the single most requested feature STILL isn't implemented. Instead, some of your brightest, dedicated, and most valuable Insiders are getting banned. This hardly looks like the "new Microsoft" that we were promised.

"Two Irishmen walk out of a bar…Hey it could happen!" Seen on the Internet

One Insider summed up his forum experience graphically.

This has become horribly depressing, Lefty thought. Maybe the time has come to elevate these stories another notch. The Likes from the other Insiders moved way up when he started to include graphic illustrations into his stories.

What is needed here is much more cowbell[25] to drive these stories to the finale Lefty realized, so he posted a continuation of his stories.

[25] *"I could use a little more cowbell on this song here guys. Hey, I put my pants on just like the rest of you -- one leg at a time. Except once my pants are on, I'm Bruce Dickinson, and I make gold records." Saturday Night Live skit*

Insider Story 100

MS then put out a press release to the Insiders which read as follows:

"Microsoft is launching a contest for members of its Windows Insider program that will give 10 of them a chance to visit the company's headquarters in Redmond, Washington. The contest details are revealed within the Insider Hub app, available in the Windows 10 Technical Preview build. Windows Insiders are asked to fill out a form on the website and then post a 1 to 3 minute video saying what they like best about the Windows 10 preview and the Windows Insider program. A group of judges at Microsoft will pick the 10 best videos and those creators will win a trip to Redmond to visit Microsoft's headquarters in April."

We all couldn't resist this opportunity, and so I submitted video opened with a montage of historical computer interface designs. The soundtrack for the video was a homemade audio clip that imitated Dave Cutler's voice dismissing the UNIX process input/output (I/O) model by singing "getta byte, getta byte, getta byte, byte, byte," to the rhythm of the "cavalry charge" finale of the William Tell Overture. He then started a positive chant about the Longhorn WinFS file system "Relational, Relational, Relational", which mimicked Steve Ballmer's over the top infamous "Developers, Developers, Developers", chant at many previous Microsoft conference events. The three-minute video ended with a video clip of a Texas Longhorn steer charging and shredding a billboard sign displaying the Windows 10 Metro interface Start Screen. I filmed and edited the movie with the assistance of a few other Insiders, including Hwrx, VJJ, and Amii.

JNC's video submission showed a 32-bit color Aero Glass interface morphing into a 4-bit color Metro Start Screen, accompanied by the ominous one and a half minute orchestral sound track from the movie Jaws.

Then later, the unexpected invitations came via email. Invited to visit Microsoft? I don't know how this happened, but forum colleague JNC (aka Cool Hand) was also invited.

The following is one theory on how our invitations came about, despite the snarky videos we submitted.

Microsoft has been long known for "eating their own dog food"[26], which meant Microsoft employees used each new Windows version, including the Windows 10TP preview, on their computers to perform actual work. Perhaps my and Cool Hand's contest application data became corrupted on their servers. This problem caused our applications to be inadvertently misfiled from the *worst* contest applications file folder, into the *best* contest applications file folder. Perhaps this was due to a NTFS file system error from a failed instance of the System File Checker, and became further complicated from not having a WinFS relational file system, to correctly identify and resolve the issue. This computer user simply failed to run a check sum test on the server file, and was simply guilty of foolishly trying to use the Win10TP to perform any actual useful work.

Despite our concerns, we decided to go and I met Cool Hand at the Seattle airport for the shuttle ride to One Microsoft Way. We arrived at the Visitor Center building early ahead of the tour group and as we looked around, noticed the basement stairway in a dark corner in the building. We followed these stairs to discover a lab and people working on many different activities. Hologram headsets allowed these workers to walk inside a computer while in real time operation. They also walked inside of an Internet router and alongside the data packets as they moved through. Inside these tubes, the data packets took avatar forms of racehorses, groceries, books, various goods and services, poker chips, porn images, and the occasional lottery ball, which apparently served to clear the tubes and prevent jams. We both needed to duck to avoid these large balls for sure. This it made me think that it might like walking inside of the Windows NT "Pipes" screen saver, as the tubes grew and expanded in all directions,.

At the rooms center a middle-aged man was working and introduced himself as Prime. Later we

[26] *Reputedly the phrase came from a Lorene Green (Bonanza) Alpo dog food TV commercial.*

further identified him as Dave Cutler's first born son. He was working on a three dimensional interface, on an 80-inch 4k Surface screen, which displayed images consisting of floating icons. We also saw floating dialog boxes, file folder contents, and some astonishing three-dimensional looking web sites.

Website content Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

When asked about user interface configuration he explained, "Like you saw ten years ago in Vista, but better." We inquired about the file system and he indicated that this was 128 bit WinFS SQL Version 2. We questioned him about utilities like HyperTerminal, sound recorder etc. "Everything you ever used and loved in Windows is back here now but better, exactly as it should be." We probed about optical discs and he explained that "DVD and Blu-ray authoring are built in", we requested information about Media Center and he offered, "built in". It's all there boys, everything you need for your PC to be whatever you want. Programming, office productivity, communications, engineering, entertainment, everything is there."

Floating windows Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

You see, "My dad Dave bought into the whole Azure, Cloud, and Mobile marketing hype. The MS executives bought into their own marketing dog food starting around 2010. I am *new school*, but to me that means making the things we developed over the years better, and not chasing a short-lived millennial-inspired four-inch screen, cloud trends, and advertising clickbait. Advertising is the bane of the modern civilized world in my view, he noted." I hear you I complained, I can have a hundred channels of ad free satellite radio for five dollars a month, but having a couple hundred channels of satellite TV for a hundred dollars a month, I am still bombarded with an endless amount of irritating and annoying commercials. They now even cover parts of the screen during a show, and the corporations have sped up rerun shows to squeeze in additional commercials up to six minutes now at each break. They are also now in the process of ruining century-old baseball traditions, to allow for more commercials.

Prime went on to say that "Continued evolution is how our species survives and how Windows has conquered the market over the past thirty years and made the world the most productive ever, he

exclaimed." We thanked him and left, to catch up with the tour. As we walked away we heard him humming, "If you start me up I'll never stop, I've been runn'in hot, you got me ticking, gonna blow my top, if you start me up, I'll never stop, never stop, never stop, never stop."

Back upstairs, we met up with the tour group now ten of us, and our guide named Drew who was a last minute replacement for Gabe. Apparently, Gabe was temporarily overwhelmed answering problem questions in the Insider forum. We followed him around as he regaled us with his perceived wonders of the Redmond campus. Drew further explained that this two-day event is a unique opportunity to experience first-hand how "we're co-developing Windows with Insiders". MS agreed to cover our travel expenses, which included flights, meals, accommodations, and some other planned activities. After touring, we met Gabe and other senior Windows leaders and got a peek at the Windows design process.

Later dropped off at the hotel we rested, with cocktails and dinner scheduled for later. The second day, we toured the hardware design labs, we heard about the evolution of Windows from Microsoft veterans, and we checked out nonpublic prototypes for future Win10TP builds, including something called Redstone. Then we took off to the airport, and back home. Little did we know at the time, what MS actually held in store for us Insiders. *To be continued…*

Praise for the content and insights of Lefty's story came from the Merry Band of Misfits and Malcontents and now they wanted more.

Lefty typically operated on the theory that most of the time it is easier to beg forgiveness, than to ask permission. He then posted his follow-up story to raise the disenchantment bar up yet another notch.

Insider Story 101

The headline on the June 21st webpage read: Microsoft to launch Windows 10 in 190 countries this coming summer.

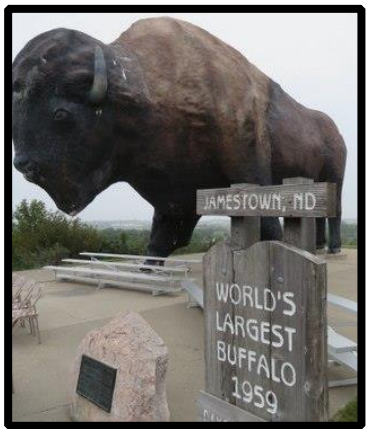
Well at least there are still 189 to pick from, I thought. Our merry group of Insiders, misfits, and malcontents all some would say, now banished not only from the Insider forum for 30 days, but also from the Internet, the entire continental US, and placed on the no-fly and terrorist-watch lists. Worst of all, our group received assurance our behavior would be noted on our permanent records and our phone numbers removed from the national Do Not Call List. Then in an additional action, which could only be described as the culmination of antiquated meanness and spite, our library cards were revoked. The group collectively decided to enjoy this month long forced vacation and get outside the US, to avoid potential rendition to Guantanamo, as the climate there presented as excessively hot this time of year.

We all traveled overland, and met up at 1060 West Addison Street in Chicago, to catch a matinee game. The Cubs didn't win of course, but we enjoyed a great time pounding down a few jumbo beers, some ballpark hot dogs, and shelled peanuts. We basked in the summer splendor of this great 100-year-old cathedral of baseball, called Wrigley Field.

The famous Wrigley Field marquee

After the game, we piled into my nine-passenger window van for the trip north along I-94 west. We decided previously to visit Dozrguy along the way as he agreed to smuggle us north across the border at Walhalla, ND and then on up to Winnipeg, Canada. I had previously visited Canada a few times legally, which included a business trip to Saskatchewan, which included a weekend fishing trip to Lac la Ronge, a glacial lake near Saskatoon. I also had fished Rainy Lake for Walleyes just across the border from International Falls, MN in previous years.

We found Dozrguy in full biker gear seated on his Harley at the World's Largest Buffalo Monument in Jamestown, just as we had previously planned.



World's Largest Buffalo, Jamestown, ND

Dozrguy leading the way on his Harley, we would sneak across the border, and then we would head around the outskirts of Winnipeg and east through Kenora where I had once honeymooned. Then we continued on to Thunder Bay, where I once experienced Robin Trower and David Knopfler (Mark's brother and Dire Straits cofounder) concerts at the local Blues Festival one past summer. We followed the Queens highway along the north shore of the big lake the Chippewa call "Gitche Gumee", and passed through Toronto on the way to Montreal, Quebec. There, we would attend and attempt to protest the

Win10 launch party, and at the same time check out Colakid to find out what his "deal" really is.

Upon arriving, we discovered that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) had recently locked up Colakid in jail. As best we could ascertain, they chased him down on horseback to catch him. As they always get their man, they of course arrested him and charged him with Causing a Disturbance. This apparently stemmed from a Jolt cola induced rant, which included something about windows ten sucking big time. Apparently, he also carried on about the requirement of a Win10 EULA (end user license agreement) to agree to continuous unlimited surveillance and the full acceptance of advertisements from Microsoft and other corporations. The group pitched in and bailed him out of jail by talking the magistrate into allowing for house arrest. Luckily, he had rented a room close enough to the conference center that his ankle bracelet would allow travel there. After a lunch at a local Tom Hortons, we headed over to the Win10 launch event.

At the conference center, we all joined the protestors outside singing Neil Young and Joni Mitchell tunes, carrying signs mostly saying "Hooray for Our Side", but also chanting Everybody Look What's Going Down. After a while, Jackson Browne showed up to the event carrying his acoustic guitar and performed his tunes, Lives in the Balance, and For Everyman.

Protestors

These protests reminded him of what I saw on TV during his youth. Born of the Vietnam War generation, I had dodged becoming cannon fodder for this unwarranted and stupid war that claimed nearly 60,000 young American men of his generation, 250,000 South Vietnamese soldiers, and more than 3 million Vietnamese civilians. He owed his life he thought, to those who protested this insanity, particularly the returned veterans against the war.[27]

This protest organizer named John, exclaimed that there is something happening here, but what it is ain't exactly clear. He continued on to explain that as of now, the Windows we knew is no longer an operating system but has now become just a corporate data mining and NSA surveillance tool, which will most likely lead us to tyranny, besides being largely unsafe to use. "I think everyone should be in agreement that allowing the supposed "*good guys*" like Microsoft and the NSA data collection for later data mining, provides a single source location for the "bad guys" to tap into and steal your personal information. The lack of encrypted data, weakening or putting back doors into data encryption algorithms, allows the bad guys to exploit this further."

He went on to explain that the cloud is just a cute euphuism for a single point of attack for hackers to obtain the most personal and destructive information personal available. The proof of the danger in this is the continual data breeches at major corporations and government organizations around the world.

[27] *The American government later revealed that it had known as early as 1966, when the American casualties were less than three thousand, that this war was unwinnable.*

Bad guys are inside your computer

The protest organizer John continued to say that Win10 is now also being used as an advertising delivery mechanism. This sad fact in turn contributes to the conspicuous consumption of "stuff", contributes to global warming, and thus cannot be tolerated. He explained that windows computers are also used for fracking, which destroys everyone's ground and surface water and causes it to catch fire. This also fills people's basements with lung cancer causing radon gas, and creates earthquakes where they never have occurred before. Those computers are also used for the Keystone and other pipelines, which may lead to large-scale water aquifer contamination. We all wished them happy protesting, and proceeded to the entrance gate.

I had previously purchased event tickets anonymously using Tor[28] on the Silk Road[29] website and paid via Bitcoin[30] to leave no easily discernable digital record. At the entrance gates, tickets were checked by the RCMP, and the group cleared for entrance, but unknowingly we were picked up on the facial

[28] *The onion router or Tor, was originally developed by the US Government for spy craft. It has recently been adopted by whistleblowers, journalists and those who desire to remain anonymous on the Internet.*

[29] *Silk Road derived its name from a network of trade routes used during the Chinese Han Dynasty. Now it is an online Darknet market, best known as a platform used to sell illegal drugs. The Dark Web is operated as a Tor hidden service, and online users are able to browse it anonymously and securely without this traffic being monitored.*

[30] *Bitcoin is an anonymous decentralized digital payment system, which eliminates the need for banks.*

recognition cameras there and were about to be detained.[31] Things should start to get interesting, right about now, I mused.

Having noticed something was up, the protestors chanting "The Whole World Is Watching", decided to charge the RCMP blockade en masse. In the resulting melee that ensued, enveloped in a scrum of protestors, signs, TV reporters, cameras, police and their horses, our group managed to slip away out through the Tom Hortons into a local Houters.

We all reassembled at the bar, myself, BBBB, JNC, Hwrx, VJJ, Nigthhawk, Amii, Preferreduser, Dozrguy, and Colakid his ankle bracelet badly battered but still attached. The scene showed us haggard, beat up, depressed, and perhaps resembling the bar scene in the first Star Wars movie.

The buxom barmaid offered, "ca va?" Recalling my time in West Africa I replied, ca va bien. All is well indeed. At least for now, I sighed.

We talked about our experiences up to this point, how far we had evolved in our realizations, and our shared beliefs the past nine months in the Insider forum. News coverage of the protests was playing on the bar's TV screen, when an unexpected image flashed up on the big screen, apparently wirelessly broadcast from some anonymous windows phone somewhere inside the bar.

Hwrx pulled out his laptop, tapped into the bar's Wi-Fi router, and hacked the unencrypted feature of the phone operating system Hello, used in lieu of passwords, for verifying identity authentication. We immediately recognized the signature on the Miracast, from the Insider forum.

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[31] *The conference database apparently had a connection to the Communications Security Establishment Canada (CSEC), Canada's national signals intelligence agency. The CSEC had been deeply involved with spying initiatives with the United States' National Security Agency (NSA), according to a secret document cache released by Edward Snowden and published by The Guardian, The New York Times, The Washington Post, Der Spiegel, as well as others.*

Cheers from Drew1903
IT REALLY ROCKS!!!!

I grabbed my tablet and hurriedly sent a phony software update to the phone's peer-to-peer update service. Of course, the clueless user had his phone set to the unsecure default "ON" setting. (MS would later remove this *feature*.)

Next, we heard a loud **OH SHOOT!** in a Canadian-British accent, followed by the flash of a new type of BSoD[32] image on the big screen.

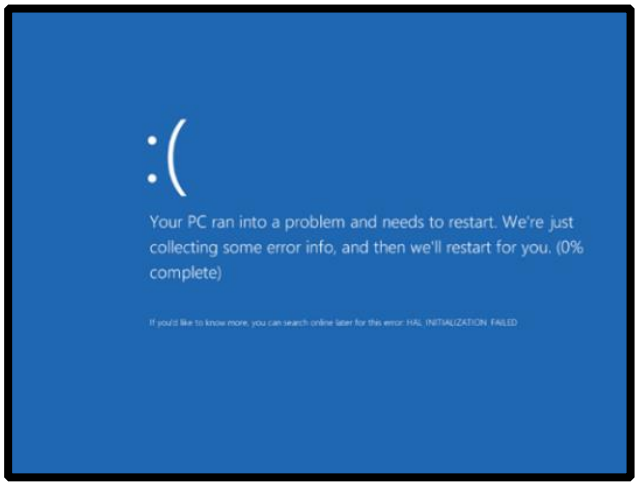


Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

"Cheers boys and girls" I shouted to my mates, as I raised my glass of Molson Golden. "Another round here", I called out to the barmaid. *To be continued…*

[32] *BSoD A stop error, commonly called the blue screen of death, is an error screen displayed on a Windows computer system following a fatal system error. It indicates a system crash, in which the operating system has reached a condition where it can no longer operate safely.*

After posting his most recent short story in the Insider forum, Lefty received a private message and authored his response to the forum moderator.

Conversations on this tab are private messages between you and the moderators of this category, intended for your sole use.

Private reply to Lefty

***please see your private message Lefty*

This is a private message.

David Wolters replied on May 12

Microsoft Forum Owner, and Wiki Author

Lefty,

Attacking people is not allowed here. Your fictional story is off-topic for this thread, is inaccurate, and is attacking the forum staff.

If you can't follow the Code of Conduct, your profile will be removed from this community. Since you have been warned previously about your behavior here, this is your final warning.

David

Lefty replied in private on May 12

- *I guess a fictional story cannot be inaccurate right?*
- *The story contained observations, not attacks right?*
- *The author related a win10 experience on this forum so I believe it is within the topic scope.*

Now that I attempted to clarify these points, I think that I understand what your job is here. None of us wants these message threads to spiral out of control with name calling and flaming vitriol.

At the same time, these threads are usually self-correcting and will find a balance if you allow it to. Intervening with a heavy hand can sometimes be counterproductive.

The overall benefit of these discussions to forum users and to a company claiming to be receptive to customer feedback has been overwhelming in its majority, being specific, detailed, refined, and well thought out.

All of this has happened in spite of being misled to believe that this Insider program strived to be a collaborative effort and to place more product emphasis on desktop users. This was important to us in light of the generally acknowledged dismal and ultimately failed Win8 experience.

These people, these customers, continue to try to help despite all of this. They remain loyal for the most part, despite the seemingly Sisyphean[33] effort in front of them.

These folks should be recipients of your admiration and not your scorn.

When you believe in things that you don't understand, you suffer. Stevie Wonder

Lefty was doing his best to protect his co-users by attempting to change the thinking of these forum mods. They continued to refer to themselves collectively as a Merry Band of Misfits and Malcontents.

Earlier he had created a discussion thread, based on one forum user's comment, but formed it into a question.

A.User started April 26

There is not a single redeeming thing about Windows 10, is there?

I've been a pretty vocal and consistent critic of the builds here for the past months, but I would like to try another tact. Glass half full so to speak.

What are the features in Win10 that will make us leave our Win7 or Win8 homes for this newest collection of bits?

Some conditions:

• They cannot be aspirational, meaning something that is not present now, but expected or wished to be.

• They cannot be present already in Windows 7 or Windows 8.

• Specify if desktop or tablet related, no phone stuff please

Under those conditions, what would a top ten-list look like?

"I always have more dogs than bones." Tom Petty

This question facilitated discussion and mostly avoided flame wars.[34] The thread generated 1200 plus messages, over 120 forum pages, by August. Later, after becoming too large, 131 pages, and 1308 replies, the mods closed and restarted a second

[33] *In Greek mythology, Sisyphus was the king of Ephyra. He was punished for chronic deceitfulness by being compelled to roll an immense boulder up a hill, only to watch it roll back down, repeating this process for eternity.*

[34] *An online flame war results when multiple users engage in provocative responses to an original post (OP) when this post is simply flame bait.*

thread to keep it from choking the forum software. This addendum to the thread grew to 36 pages, 355 replies, by the end of September.

Undaunted by previous warnings from the mods, he posted his next story, saying to no one but himself, “it’s not dark yet but it’s getting there”.

Insider Story 110

Continued…"Next we heard in the background a loud OH SHOOT! in a Canadian British accent, followed by a flash and a BSoD image on the big screen. "Cheers boys and girls" I shouted to my mates, as I raised my glass of Molson Golden. "Another round here", I called out to the barmaid.

The words no sooner left my mouth when four guys walked in the front door and bellied up to the bar wearing Guy Fawkes masks.

The Guy Fawkes mask group

They immediately commenced visually checking out the place for surveillance cameras, but Hwrx already shut them off when he hacked into the bars Internet router. Having gotten this assurance, they shed their masks introducing themselves as Hula_Baloo, CrazyKats, FredWilson_905, and Techie007L from the Insider forum. The now unmasked group revealed they heard about our banishment dilemma, and subsequently missed our occasionally obnoxious, yet compelling and humorous presence in the forum. They further explained that other Insiders mentioned our plans for escape up north, and they figured that a Houters would be the first place to look.

Curious about how we were holding up in the midst of this drama, they also wanted to check out Colakid and find out what his "deal" really is. We told them the story of our day over a few Molson's, and laughed heartily at everyone's role in the great adventure and resulting melee.

Colakid regaled us all with his story of the ankle bracelet and his adventures in the Canadian hoosegow, the RCMP chase, of almost being trampled by their horses and being kicked and splattered with horse dung in the process. He told us about getting held in jail on the Group W bench, and Officer Dudley's police report, complete with the seventeen five-by-seven color glossy photographs having circles and arrows and comments on the back explaining each one.[35] His story came complete with pantomimed actions, his full orchestration, and three part harmonies provided by our group. He particularly cracked us up in his synopsis of the day, "The only thing I did wrong was to stay in Montreal a day too long." Amii laughed so hard, that her tears ran down her leg.

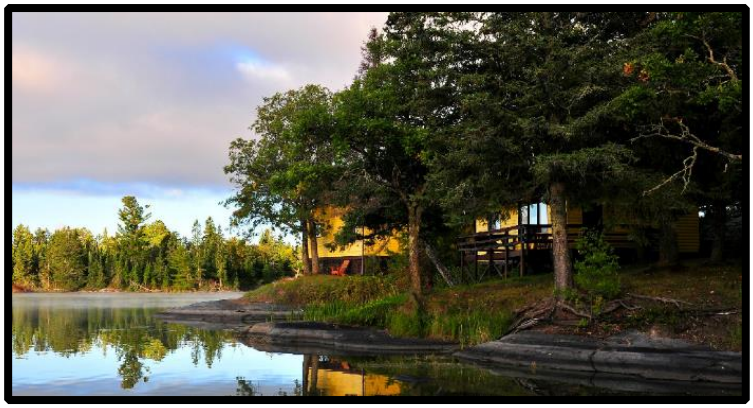
Later we pooled some money, and talked the new arrivals into walking over to RCMP headquarters, sans masks of course, to bail out the jailed protesters. Of course, this whole mess was partly our fault and they were the ones who were locked up. After a few beers, it seemed like a good idea, and we later met up back at the Houters again having a grand old time talking about computers, cars, baseball, women, and music.

The Guy Fawkes guys also managed to have Colakid released from house arrest, by claiming to be his uncles. We got our bail money back, and the judge allowed him to leave town for now, and come back and pay the fine later. Colakid promised to do that, after he sold some cedar mulch to raise the money. The Guy Fawkes group explained that they would love to stay and participate in the mischief and mayhem that was sure to result from our extended exile, but they had previously planned to attend Burning Man in August, with many stops to make along the way. They for sure wanted to catch a Blue Bombers football game in Winnipeg, enjoy a boat cruise along the Red River, one of the few north flowing rivers. They would also check out the previously mentioned and much acclaimed, largest buffalo monument in Jamestown. They also

[35] *… they took twenty-seven 8 x 10 colored glossy photographs with circles and arrows and a paragraph on the back of each one explainin' what each one was, to be used as evidence against us…, Arlo Guthrie, Alice's Restaurant*

wanted to see the Crazy Horse Memorial in the Black Hills of South Dakota near the town of Berne; the rumored hometown of the once famous Rocky Raccoon, on their way to the Nevada desert. We parted wishing each other happy trails.

We subsequently learned that Colakid had been vacationing in Montreal at the time, primarily to practice his French, like fenêtres 10 suce, windows 10 c'est une enorme merde, and Windows 10 me brise les burnes.[36] We gave him a ride back home to Kingston, Ontario on our way to Lake of the Woods. In his hometown, we enrolled him in the local twelve-step program (All Addictions Anonymous), dropped him off at his house, and spoke with his worried mother. We wished him good luck, and then drove to where we planned to rent a couple cabins. Once there, we planned to spend the month fishing for walleyes, reading, boating, taking in the sites, and hiking local trails.



Lake of the Woods cabins

I was reading "No Place to Hide", and the rest books like "Designing the User Interface: Strategies for Effective Human-Computer Interaction". Also "Code: The Hidden Language of Computer Hardware and Software (Developer Best Practices)", "Unreasonable Men: Theodore Roosevelt and the Republican Rebels

[36] *Windows 10 sucks, Windows 10 is a huge piece of shit, and Windows 10 breaks my balls.*

Who Created Progressive Politics," "Tom Clancy Full Force and Effect," and "Fifty Shades of Grey." Guess who was reading that last one? We would occasionally watch movies like, "Ferris Bueller's Day Off", "Citizen Four", the Netflix "House of Cards" programming, and the "Deadwood" HBO series.

I had hacked a nearby Hughes satellite connection, which allowed us to receive news of the outside world, without the NSA's participation. We already shut off our cells phones, pulled the batteries, put the phones inside the cabin's refrigerator, and shut off the vans GPS. We checked out the news online, and discovered that a fundraising effort done on our behalf, had raised $20k at fundly.com which we could use to expense our month long exile. Our month long *exile had now been* financed.

We would catch Walleyes (or pike as the locals called them), and a few Perch. We would cut the line if we hooked a nasty, slimy snake-like Northern, as they weren't particularly tasty and were hard to filet because of all the bones. We fileted the best fish for lunch or supper, first frying up bacon and onions over a campfire in a cast iron pan. Then we put these hors d'oeuvres into slices of bread as an appetizer. We later fried the pancake battered fish in the leftover bacon and onion grease. Could it get any better than this, I pondered.

We would travel to town in pairs, to stock up on Molson, bread, milk, coffee, eggs, cereal, night crawlers, leeches, and fudge striped cookies[37]. We rented a 21-foot pontoon houseboat from the cabin owner and would cruise the lake around the islands, and on occasion stop for a shore lunch of the fresh fish we caught. The lake stretched over 70 miles long and wide, which made this the sixth largest freshwater lake, after the five Great Lakes, the cabin owner had told them. We took care to stay away from the American side of the lake, but we observed large numbers of American white pelicans, and many nesting pairs of bald eagles. The boat also was provisioned with a

[37] *They had previously learned to like these from their mention by Odd Todd and his excellent web animation called "A Day in the Life."*

cooking grill, and we would occasionally fry up burgers, bratwurst, and hot dogs for our meals. Occasionally we would also grill some local *saltwater soaked* sweet corn in the husks.

Our Pontoon houseboat

When we fished, we typically stayed out on the lake from 6 to 10 am, or from 6 to 10 pm, and sometimes both. We enjoyed these quiet times, which were absent the recreational boats and jet skis disturbing peace the lake. When the bait shop was closed, we bought night crawlers and leeches, my Walleye bait of choice, from an outdoor vending machine. If we put our caught fish on a stringer into the water, the Muskies would come in and take them, and as a result, the fish needed to stay inside the cooler next to the beer. Some evenings we could catch a radio broadcast of a baseball game floating over the air from the American side.

We stayed in touch with our families during this time, sending encrypted SMS messages via a laptop modem and acoustic coupler from the phone booth outside the bait shop. We would also occasionally send PGP[38] encrypted emails via the Tor network and the satellite

[38] *PGP stands for Pretty Good Privacy, a popular encryption software program. In cryptography, encryption is the process of encoding a message or text in such a way that only authorized parties can access it. The intended information or message, is encrypted using an encryption algorithm, generating ciphertext that can only be read or accessed if first decrypted.*

connection, but thought this was somewhat risky, as the NSA had probably already compromised the Tor network.

Our fuel came from the local marina, and we used care to pay only in cash. The marina also sold dry goods, beverages, and snacks and had a gift shop full of trinkets with Lake of the Woods printed on them. The store also sold t-shirts containing humorous slogans like, "If a man speaks in a forest, and there is no woman around to hear, is he still wrong?" and "If you accidently hit a Mime, does it make a sound?" and Tell your boobs to stop looking at my eyes.

Viewing the rock cliffs around Lake of the Woods by boat, we learned that these formations were dotted with 5000-year-old rock paintings, made from berry juice and sap, having been painted by various aboriginal First Nation groups. According to the locals, these sites are considered sacred, to be treated with great respect. The local tradition is that an offering was needed when visiting, like tobacco or other meaningful items. Our offering was a Windows 7 Ultimate 64-bit DVD disc, the most valuable item in our possession.

Aboriginal rock painting

On yet another trip, we visited a railway museum that takes you back in time to the steam engine and displayed a fully restored 4008 steam locomotive. We also visited Tomahawk Lighthouse built in the 1900's, and the Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historical Center, a 7000-year trip back in time including burial mounds and an interpretative center.

Within the first week, JNC received an email via the Tor network that contained a public PGP key and requested his. They exchanged keys and before long, the encrypted email arrived explaining he heard about our banishment and exile, and about how their story was spreading far and wide across the Internets.

This email came from Brad Ward – President and CEO of Starhatch and he shared a proposal for JNC and his team of exiles.

Brad was interested in funding a skunk works project, to produce software packages to fix Windows 10 with a product called Start10, to serve as an upgrade and expansion of their current Start8 product.

Start8, he explained had returned the familiar start menu to the Windows 8 operating system. The program allowed users to switch between three menu styles and allowed customization of the menus. Start8 also added other improvements to the Windows 8 desktop such as disabling the charms bar, hot corners and the ability to boot directly to the desktop rather than to a Start screen.

Brad communicated his own vision for a new product to the Lake of the Woods group. They had developed a Start10 beta product in-house, but he was now looking at doing something more comprehensive. "No one else can know about this and we would work directly for him", he offered. In his view, the Windows 10 OS was now dumbed down for first time smart phone users and the code dumbed down for first time software developers. This left experienced users, desktop and laptop users and experienced developers having yet another downgrade from Win7, as with Win8.

"I don't believe that flat minimalism is the right answer, explained Brad. You can use minimalist skeuomorphism and still create graphics that have the appearance of a real-world button, allowing the user to have an intuitive understanding that they can interact with it. UI's can be designed in a minimalist manner, and end up having a minimalist skeuomorphic design." He also insisted that removal of configuration and customization options wasn't a valid marketing or technical choice. His company had been in the business of doing the opposite for some twenty years now.

Despite our limited Internet access, we noticed that the initial Win10 launch was a disaster, and the "update" had *bricked*[39] millions of computers worldwide. This "free" upgrade had also deviously stolen their previously purchased Windows 7 and 8 installation keys. Users felt that they were tricked into installing and damaging their computers and felt betrayed due to the spying and advertising. The press was brutal, printing horrid press reports of the disaster that dropped the MS stock price into single digits.

Press reviews told the story.

"Windows Vista, Windows 8 and now this? It is looking like three strikes for the company with a near monopoly 1.2 billion user market. The company's new online software store is filled with low quality and poor performing apps, which

[39] *The word "brick", in this case describes an electronic device such as a smartphone, game console, router, or computer that, due to a serious misconfiguration, corrupted firmware, or other software or hardware problem, can no longer function, making it as technologically useful as a brick.*

seemingly underwent no vetting process at all. The OneDrive is unreliable in availability, and dubious in terms of security. The voice assistant Cortana misunderstands language at an alarming rate to the point of being unusable, and has very few abilities at this point. The Skype app is of lower quality than the existing available software which is known to have been compromised by the NSA. There is also a continued nagging throughout operation of this OS about logging in with a Microsoft account, and the display of unwanted advertising."

The more capable press got technical in their stories.

"The new OS is devoid of metaphor, the interactive elements do not have any visual treatment that indicates they are "buttons". The UI simply assumes the user knows that certain parts of the UI will react to interaction, and certain parts will not. It is devoid of other contextual clues to inform the user of which is which. Clicking or tapping on the Internet Explorer icon for example within a large tile in the Start Screen will launch Internet Explorer. This tile is devoid of beveling, texture, gradients, or anything else that might make it look like a real-world object."

In his email, Brad revealed that he wanted to fly up from his headquarters in Plymouth, MI to the group's cabin hideout in his floatplane to meet with them. The group agreed to a preliminary meeting, and they setup a meeting time for the next week, where Brad would flesh out his ideas in further detail in person.

Brad's chartered floatplane

During the rest of the week, the group discussed the wisdom of taking on this project, and if they currently had the skill sets and desire to do this. They eventually decided to hear him out.

The next week at the meeting, they were presented with the details of the mission, if they chose to accept it, which focused on the creation of two software packages. There would be a *Plus Pack* to add things to the OS, and a *Minus Pack* to remove some bad things.

The Plus Pack would:

1. Restore a proper user configurable Start Menu replacing the modified Start Screen App
2. Provide several extensively configurable Aero Glass themes
3. Restore window and dialog box customization and configuration
4. Restore a user configurable Search mechanism
5. Enhance security by adding a professional level anti-malware package
6. Provide the addition of a configurable windows hosts file for Domain Name Server[40] or DNS, configuration and management
7. Change the default configuration of the firewall to be less permissive
8. Install a new improved version of Windows Media Center developed by their group which had been previously removed by MS
9. Install an improved Control Panel and restore control over updates
10. Improve isolation and security for multiple user accounts.

The Minus Pack would:

1. Remove PUP's[41] from the OS in a user selectable way, i.e. Cortana, Skype, Xbox, The Store, MS Account login, additional selectable Metro apps, etc. This would be accomplished in an irrevocable manner via Group Policy edits, and Registry database modifications.
2. Remove the Start Screen App
3. Block entry of any advertisements into the OS
4. Remove the Settings App

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[40] *The most important function of DNS servers is to translate or resolve human-memorable domain names (i.e. cnn.com) into numeric Internet addresses (i.e. 151.101.193.67) which computers understand.*

[41] *PUP, potentially unwanted programs bundled with other software making it hard for the user to opt-out. This can include software that displays intrusive advertising, or tracks the user's Internet usage to sell information to advertisers, or injects its own advertising into web pages. There are often no signs they are installed, with no uninstall or opt-out instructions.*

Further requirements would include that both packages be suitable for enterprise use, and allow slipstreaming[42] into existing software images. The anticipated delivery date for the RTM was August 1. Starhatch would release their in-house product initially but then offer the new product that we would build a few months later. The software DVD would also include a library of icons, themes, as well as some cool screensavers.

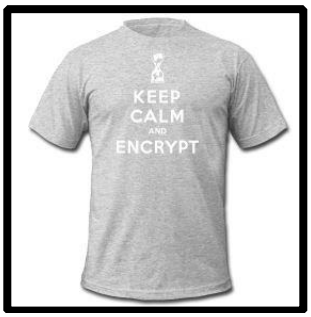
Unable to determine at this point just how far MS would go to dismantle the windows we all knew and loved, Brad also suggested we discretely continue monitoring the forums under anonymous profiles, like A.User, for any necessary additions or subtractions to the initial scope of work.

The group then discussed and debated the pros and cons of the task overnight, and the next morning, agreed to terms in a handshake deal. Brad left behind his check for $100k for initial startup funding.

After meeting with Brad, the group agreed JNC would formally become the leader of the team and the head of *design excellence*. The working name for the project would be code name Granite, due to the solid elegance of this stone, and its extensive presence surrounding their current environment at Lake of the Woods.

Later that day, they chipped in and bought their fearless leader a T-shirt befitting the occasion that they had found at the marina gift shop. "One more day to delay doing laundry," JNC quipped. I also got one for myself, which would turn out to be prophetic of events yet to come.

[42] *In computing, slipstreaming is the act of integrating software patches into the installation files of the original OS, and result in the direct installation of the updated files. Slipstreaming saves companies time and money.*

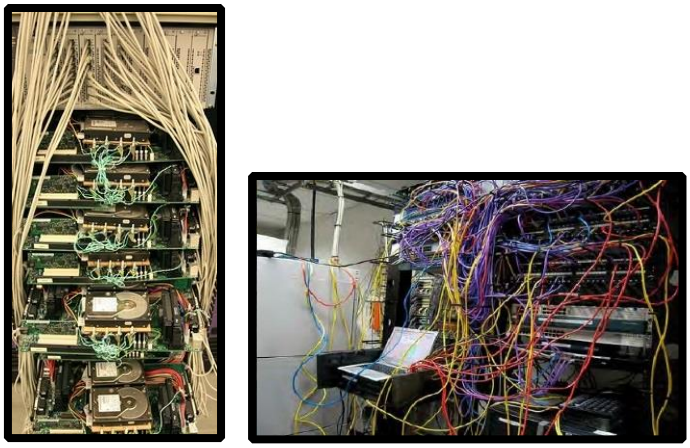


One for our leader and one for me

Checking in with Colakid for an update via encrypted email, he promised that he was continuing to work the steps, and was currently on step two. We agreed Colakid would become involved in the software beta testing if he completed his steps in time.

As a group, we decided we would remain there and extend our stay past the originally intended thirty days at the cabins. However Amii needed to return home to care for her young daughters and partner, but offered to continue to work her assignments by collaborating remotely.

We split the two cabins into a work and a living cabins to ensure proper focus during the weeks ahead. The cabin computer network, built from what they brought with them and what they were able to find in town, had this certain "Up Nort" look to it.



Homemade network at the cabins, at the beginning and at the end

A few weeks later, VJJ informed us he needed to return to Europe, as his work visa was expiring soon. Due to Amii also departing, this left us short-handed. JNC then recruited a remote worker replacement named Renee, who held a high level of OS creation skills to head up system integration, which was the merges of the others' work.

Preferreduser received the assignment to oversee the validation or system testing department, and I would complete the documentation of the products, tend the boat and cabins, and keep an eye out for drones. My 20-gauge shotgun and I discovered a few of them flying too close to the cabins so I shot them down, repurposing their cameras into a makeshift outdoor surveillance system.

I modeled my activities after my hero, with success

JNC then divided software development tasks among the others, based on their own skill sets, for BBBB, Hwrx, and Dozrguy. JNC would write code as needed. Again short-handed, we offered Brad a few proposals to resolve this. He approved them and we provided VJJ, Amii, and Renee with video communication capability and another unit for the cabin. He also approved us taping into the 1000 Mb fiber connection across the lake over on the US side.

Starhatch funded video conference equipment

Image Courtesy: Cisco.com

We setup a conference call to Brad to test out the video conferencing system. The fiber Internet pipe now connected, we projected video and used the shared whiteboard to work on code using the side screen.

Brad refocused us by sharing, "Start10 will be the first of many enhancements planned for Starhatchs catalog this year. We firmly believe that users should be able to personalize all aspects of their PCs interface, anything from aesthetics to functionality."

Renee suggested as she couldn't be physically present, we need to bring in another serious programmer she knew named Nigthhawk, and he joined us at the cabins shortly after.

A few weeks later, we checked in with Colakid, via encrypted email and still working the steps, and had progressed to step seven now, he bragged. We

remained behind schedule, so we agreed that Colakid would be allowed to become involved, and collaborate remotely for now.

On particularly nice weather days, we would use the boat for floating coding parties. JNC ran a tight ship, so to speak, and the work proceeded along nicely.

Each day we would recite the pledge initiated by Amii: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the Windows 7 operating system, and to the users which it serves, one OS under Billy G., with choice and productivity for all."

As they continued their work and monitored the Insider forum, it became clear the gutting of windows continued, now including the complete elimination of Aero, and the proliferation of single instance, screen space hogging, poor performing, apps. We now better understood how deep the butchery of twenty-five years of progressive Windows development would go now in the wielding of their digital Sledge-O-Matic[43].

MS as a company, long stood atop the shoulders of giants like Bill Gates, Paul Allen, Dave Cutler, and Mark Lucovsky, but now the MS millennials who only knew about phones, and nothing of history and real computers, appeared to want to cut them off at the knees just for spite.

Windows 10 now appeared to the group to be teetering on the verge of being beyond what we could fix without writing a complete replacement OS. Fortunately, for the group, most of the C++ code already written could be repurposed into a new OS, but this would require a much larger project than originally anticipated. This reminded me of the expansion of a kitchen remodel project which began as new countertops and cabinet hardware, and then blossomed into including a new floor, new cabinets, new appliances, lighting, and even new paint. Brad would need to come back up north, to hold another discussion and planning session with the group.

At this meeting, Brad relayed that he crunched the numbers regarding Start10, using a $1.2bn figure for the

[43] *American comedian and prop comic Gallagher, used his signature sketch as a pitch for the "Sledge-O-Matic," a large wooden mallet that he used to smash a variety of food items and other objects, culminating with a watermelon.*

total windows installed base, an installed base of 700m machines on Windows 7, 400m on XP, 40m on Vista, and 60m on Windows 8. Marketing projections showed that up to ten percent of this installed base would purchase Start10. The result would be a revenue windfall of about $500 million for Starhatch. He indicated he was amenable to investing half this amount into the new OS project.

Also at this meeting, Renee explained via video conference that she previously worked with Dave Cutler developing the VMS operating system at DEC and knew his two sons. One son, Prime who JNC and I met in the basement at Microsoft and the other was Chuck who didn't like to be called Charles. She explained that Chuck, don't even think or dream about calling me Charles, was now disillusioned in his work at MS and looking for another opportunity. Our initial project was perhaps insignificant in scope to interest him, but he might be interested in this expanded one.

Discussion continued regarding the addition of staff, and JNC suggested that we bring the Guy Fawkes mask group of Hula_Baloo, CrazyKats, FredWilson_905, and Techie007L into the project shortly. *To be continued….*

The Insider forum messages continued.

TedSG

It's interesting that Microsoft's "lost decade" was blamed on Ballmer, an MBA type, instead of a product type, and that now Nadella, an Engineer, was supposed to right the ship and return Microsoft to one focused on product. It seems to me that Nadella isn't really in charge. I don't know who is, but their whole revenue model has changed, and it's not about product. It's solely focused on marketing activities of the app store, Bing advertising, and other methods of monetizing the users instead of serving them. It looks like Microsoft sees its users now as cows to milk.

The operating system is no longer there to serve the needs of users, but just the needs of advertisers and sellers. We are no longer the customers, since the product is free.

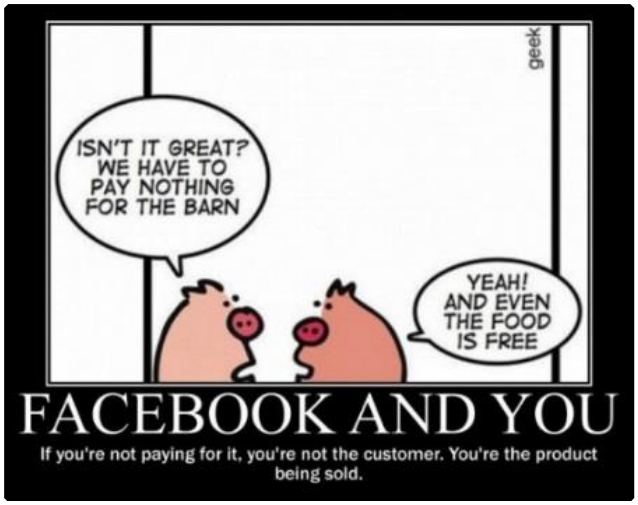
"If the rate of change inside an institution is less than the rate of change outside, the end is in sight." Former GE CEO John Francis "Neutron Jack" Welch Jr.

Reply: lefty11

You said it! All we want is some UI customization CHOICES so some of us can EASILY get rid of the bad ideas that some collection of glue-sniffing fools who live in a "touchy-clicky" cave in the basement of a unnamed building on M$'s campus. Hey it's really cool that M$ has made a user interface that can (kinda) be understood by most amphibians, pond scum and my dog, that's great...but let the rest of us thumb-wielding Homo-Sapiens-Sapiens do our thing the way we see fit. Don't shove it down our throats!

"Science flies spaceships to the moon. Religion flies airliners into buildings." - American particle physicist, philosopher, author, and religious skeptic, - Victor J. Stenger

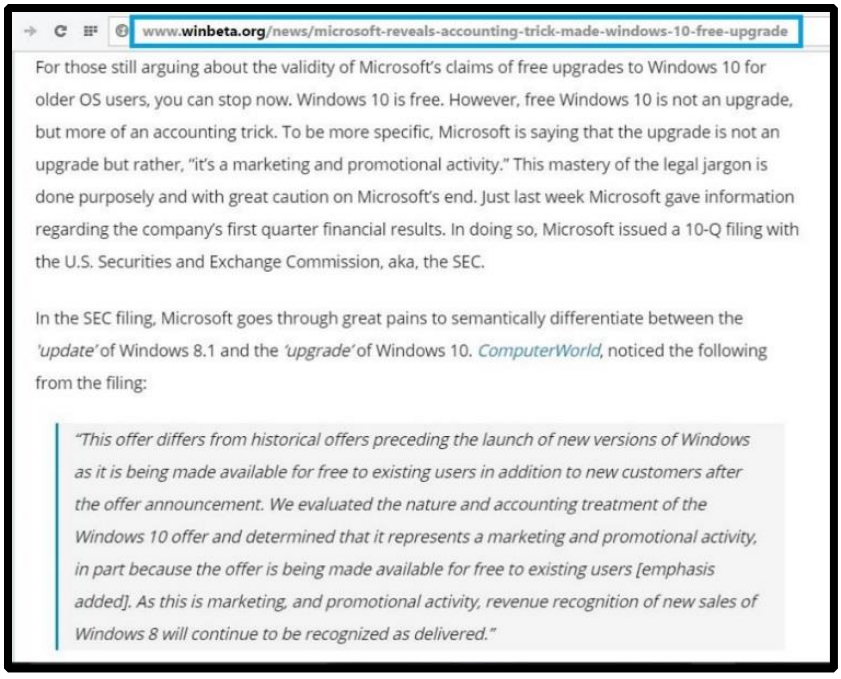
They included graphic statements in their messages.



Rick-M

Wonder why Win10 will be FREE for the first year.

This article may explain it.


www.winbeta.org/news/microsoft-reveals-accounting-trick-made-windows-10-free-upgrade

For those still arguing about the validity of Microsoft's claims of free upgrades to Windows 10 for older OS users, you can stop now. Windows 10 is free. However, free Windows 10 is not an upgrade, but more of an accounting trick. To be more specific, Microsoft is saying that the upgrade is not an upgrade but rather, "it's a marketing and promotional activity." This mastery of the legal jargon is done purposely and with great caution on Microsoft's end. Just last week Microsoft gave information regarding the company's first quarter financial results. In doing so, Microsoft issued a 10-Q filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, aka, the SEC.

In the SEC filing, Microsoft goes through great pains to semantically differentiate between the *'update'* of Windows 8.1 and the *'upgrade'* of Windows 10. *ComputerWorld*, noticed the following from the filing:

> *"This offer differs from historical offers preceding the launch of new versions of Windows as it is being made available for free to existing users in addition to new customers after the offer announcement. We evaluated the nature and accounting treatment of the Windows 10 offer and determined that it represents a marketing and promotional activity, in part because the offer is being made available for free to existing users [emphasis added]. As this is marketing, and promotional activity, revenue recognition of new sales of Windows 8 will continue to be recognized as delivered."*

All this doom and gloom makes it time for another story, Lefty mumbled to no one in particular.

Insider Story 111

Brad told the Project Granite group that this project discussion was now serious enough that he needed to inform his board of directors of their previously well-kept secret. He would bring a few of his own programming and management people aboard, and they would relocate up to the cabins to keep the secret contained as much as possible. Another floatplane would be leased specifically for this purpose. They also agreed the project would continue as code named Granite, at least for now.

This planning depended on hiring Chuck, don't even think, or dream about calling me Charles, to lead the project, the group agreed. Brad volunteered to fly out to Redmond to recruit him for the project and offer him full control plus a lot of money, if that is what it took.

They also discussed software called RealOS, which was an existing open-source operating system intended as being binary-compatible with the computer programs and device drivers made for Windows. As a spin-off of a previous attempt to clone Windows 95, the development started in early 1998, and the developers now worked on the incremental addition of some features already found in Windows. The ultimate goal of RealOS was to allow a user to remove Windows and install RealOS without ever noticing a negative change. Those accustomed to the familiar Windows user interface, would find using RealOS straightforward. Everything would simply work.

The OS would initially would have the Classic user interface, but the Project Granite group wanted to write an advanced optional three-dimensional interface to show off the real power of what a well-written OS could be and could do on the latest computer hardware.

RealOS developers are not permitted under law to read existing Windows source code. All of the computer code that had been previously written for the RealOS had been based on publicly available documentation, or from research conducted using clean room reverse

engineering.[44] [45]The code within RealOS was currently licensed under a free software or open source license, primarily GNU GPL v2 and BSD.

After some research, JNC and I learned that responsibility for various aspects of the RealOS Project, which began in Europe, was designated to several people. Aleksey was in charge of Administration, Amine for General Affairs and Outreach, Pierre, the IT administrator for project infrastructure, with Ziliang and Victor handling Public Relations.

A German non-profit organization, called deutschland@RealOS.org, also supported the RealOS project. Technically not a Windows clone, the RealOS strove to be an operating system, which implemented the Windows architecture, and was compatible with Windows software application programs and hardware device drivers.[46] The developers involved believed the windows architecture itself was robust and powerful enough, but business decisions had restricted how Windows worked and looked, and this frustrated them. Therefore, they elected to write an operating system of their own. For end users, RealOS's ability to run both Windows programs and use its hardware drivers provides people another alternative to replace an existing Windows installation.

RealOS was primarily written in the C, and C++ programming languages, but current project progress had slowed due to a lack of available developers, having the necessary skill-sets. At this point, progress had all but stopped.

Brad thought, and we agreed, that this situation provided a perfectly timed opportunity to infuse programmer time, talent, and money into this stalled project and drive it to completion.

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[44] *There is a legal case-law mechanism called "clean room design" that is employed to avoid copyright infringement when reverse engineering software.*
[45] *Reverse engineering software involves using two separate engineering groups separated by a Chinese wall. One group works with the hardware to reverse engineer the original algorithms and then documents their findings. The other group writes the computer code, based only on that documentation.*
[46] *A device driver is a computer program that operates or controls a particular type of hardware device that is installed in or attached to a computer.*

Brad saw opportunity here, and his excitement showed. It was as if they already purchased and installed the kitchen cabinets and countertops, so why not put in a new floor as well, he thought. If they could improve the Aero glass interface, add a relational file system, improve the screen fonts, return control of the OS to the user, and eliminate security issues, this would become a special advance in the state of the art. Someone would need to visit northern Germany, to meet their team and find out if they would share their source code. I volunteered to go, and volunteered our current leader JNC to accompany me.

Past the thirty-day ban now and assuming our records were clear, we caught a ride in Brad's plane back to Plymouth, rented a car, and headed to Chicago. We hopped on a nonstop Lufthansa coach class flight to Manheim. Along the way my legs became cramped up in the tiny coach seats I needed to walk around, but the female German flight attendant yelled at me "You vil sit down!". Based on her tone and body style, I thought she might be able to pin me, and under protest, I complied. I did make a mental note to request an upgrade to business class for the return trip.

Once there, we met the group of five from the RealOS Project to work out the details regarding the source code and the maintenance of the GNU GPL v2[47] and BSD[48] open source licenses. We discussed and debated the roles everyone would play going forward. The German RealOS group became super pumped up about having the additional investment of labor and funding into their failing project.

Back from Germany source code in-hand, the group began their task. Brad was successful in recruiting Chuck, don't even think or dream about calling me Charles, to the project, and also rented us an additional cabin to use as a conference room and to provide additional working room. I moved the video

[47] *The GNU General Public License is a free software license, which guarantees end users the freedom to run, study, share (copy), and modify the software.*
[48] *BSD licenses are a family of permissive free software licenses, imposing minimal restrictions for the redistribution of software.*

conferencing equipment and connected the fiber network connection to our newest cabin.

Chuck, don't even think, or dream about calling me Charles, Cutler became our fearless leader, assigning JNC and Renee as his direct reports. JNC would continue to liaise with the German RealOS people and integrate the code, while Renee would coordinate the code writing assignments and liaise with the Starhatch team. Other duties remained as previously assigned.

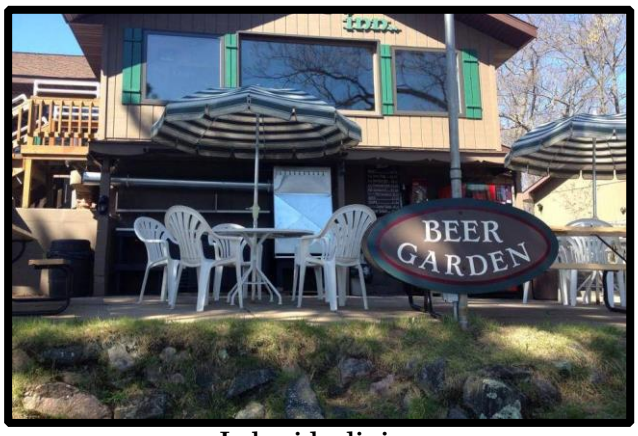
Meanwhile, my repurposed former drone surveillance cameras caught a few interesting pics of creature nightlife surrounding the cabins.

Nightlife at the cabins

The Project Granite team members used the RealOS software on their desktop and portable computers, ever since the code base had been assimilated. We had also enlisted a couple members of the software-testing department at Starhatch, at Brad's suggestion, and the German team members assisted in the testing. Our team of coders was thus made much larger and stronger with these additional resources.

The group continued their sightseeing boat travels, with floating code-writing parties, and discovered an interesting Inn on the American side of the lake, which offered outdoor lakeside dining in their beer garden. We docked the boat right there and enjoy charbroiled brats, hot dogs, burgers, rib sandwiches, grilled chicken sandwiches, or even a Caesar salad. One day each week, a band played live rock music from the bar directly across the inter-lake channel.

Now no longer banished and exiled, they could safely explore areas on the American side of the lake. They didn't believe they ever got onto the Disposition Matrix, aka the drone kill list.



Lakeside dining

On the other side of the lake, they also found the Black Bear Lodge, which contained a nice bar, dining room and gift shop. I bought a sweatshirt emblazoned with the Black Bear logo. We enjoyed many long late dinners there, as our group became more like a family. The lodge served excellent beef and fish meals, hand-muddled Whiskey Old Fashions, and delicious and nutritious White Russians for dessert. Brad charitably approved expense reports for meal and bar expenses.

The bartender was a great storyteller, and told them one about a guy who lived in one of the cabins across the lake. As the story went, he asked his wife to walk across the lake on a cold winter's night to get him a six-pack of beer. She agreed and asked for some money, but he said to just put it on their account. When she arrived, the bartender told her that he was a real piker for sending her without the money, but agreed to put it on his account. Later when the guy stopped for a beer and to settle his account, the bartender questioned him as to why he didn't just give her the money. At first, he refused to provide an explanation, but after continued badgering, he relented and confessed that at the time he wasn't sure the lake was frozen over yet.

View of the lodge across the lake from the floatplane

July became a month dedicated to working with the RealOS alpha code, making the required additions, to produce solid beta code to bring to Burning Man in late August. The vison of our leader, Chuck, don't even think, or dream about calling him Charles, wrote his mantra across the top of the white board for each meeting:

Return Control to the End User, and Give Them a Secure OS Configuration as the Default

Chuck, don't even think or dream about calling me Charles, and JNC would hold regular video meetings with Renee, VJJ, and Amii, to get updated reports and to keep them in the loop regarding Project Granite.

Chuck, don't even think or dream about calling me Charles, brought a set of software tools with him called Intrinsa. These tools created a virtual environment for a program within the build process, which plotted multiple execution paths, and uncovered memory conflicts and other errors without manual intervention.

Hwrx became integrally involved in reverse engineering the Media Center software teaming up remotely with Amii to accomplish this huge task. At this point, they had managed to produce an Aero Glass ten-foot user interface[49] or UI, which incorporated the

[49] *A 10-foot user interface is a graphical user interface designed for TV's. It uses interface elements that are larger for seeing at the typical viewing distance.*

various streaming media services currently on the market. In addition to keyboard and mouse, the software worked with touch screen, gesture, and even a remote control.

BBBB, Dozrguy, and VJJ worked remotely on the UI improvements to RealOS. They produced the new improved taskbar, and a Start Menu, which was amazing. They used the best aspects of XP, Vista, and the Win7 UI to create an improved multiple themed UI.

Nigthhawk was assigned to write the relational file system and search functions, working directly beside Chuck, don't even think or dream about calling me Charles, in writing and testing the computer code.

JNC worked remotely with Renee writing the interface code, (screen fonts, dialog boxes, etc.) and managed the overall coding project, setting milestones, and providing status reports to the team. JNC coordinated with the many software vendors to ensure their software would work in Granite, and that they would be able to write *real* and powerful software application programs once again.

Preferreduser assembled, installed, and tested the code as each build version became available.

I installed and tested each build documenting how the code worked, and I would continue to modify the documentation, as the software progressed to and beyond the beta stage. I also continued managing the cabins, the boat, and kept the shotgun loaded to blast any surveillance, misguided, or lost drone out of the sky.

Dozrguy kept his Harley at the cabins the whole time and hadn't been able to ride much. He decided to take a one-week break and travel the 700 or so miles to the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. When asked why he would travel this far, he defensively offered, "because I'm a Biker and that's where I'm supposed to be right now!" We already knew he was a biker, because whenever any of us called his bike a motorcycle, he would correct us saying it isn't a motorcycle, it's a Harley-Davidson!

He showed us the event flyer, which read: "if you like the thrill and feeling of power experienced riding in a large group then you need to attend the Black Hills Rally, a once in a lifetime event. Normally this event

hosts about half a million bikers, but this year the number was expected to be near one million."

Dozrguy planned to meet up with a group of roughly a hundred bikers at Warroad, MN. We would provide him and his bike a boat ride to Muskeg Bay at the southwest corner of the lake. He expressed that one motivation for putting this trip together, is that riding on a long journey isn't only more fun in a big group, but is also much safer.

Later he would say the weather was hot, the ride was long, but when he arrived at Sturgis,[50] it appeared as if he was in a *biker heaven*.

Dozrguy's Harley

Image Courtesy: Harley-Davidson.com

Dozrguy continued, this trip wasn't only about the amazing adventure of the ride, but also the incredible sights and sounds you see once at the event. Nothing can prepare you for the feeling and sounds of vast numbers of motorcycles everywhere you look, or the fantastic rides awaiting you throughout Sturgis and the surrounding areas. Dozrguy explained if people glared at your wife or girlfriend the way you want them to look at your bike, you'd have trouble.

Kid Rock and REO Speedwagon, performed concerts at the Harley plaza downtown. Harley-Davidson employees and Sturgis residents previously celebrated the groundbreaking of the, 11,000 square

[50] *Sturgis, named in honor of the Civil War Union General Samuel D. Sturgis, is close to the geographical center of the lower 48 states.*

foot Harley-Davidson Plaza a few months earlier in downtown Sturgis. Bill Davidson, great-grandson of Harley founder William A. Davidson and Vice President of the Harley-Davidson Museum. The Sturgis mayor kicked-off the event with comments about their shared history with the Sturgis motorcycle rally. Afterwards, a professional motocross rider performed a ceremonial *burn out* at the plaza construction site.

Downtown Sturgis via webcam before

America's first motorcycle company, Indian, hosted a party at Sturgis' famous Buffalo Chip. Southern rock band Lynyrd Skynyrd performed live on the Chip's main stage. The company celebrated the one-year anniversary of its re-introduction into the motorcycle industry and was now owned by Polaris Industries. The Indian Motorcycle exhibit contained hands-on product demonstrations, apparel sales, and accessory displays. They could also ride the Indian motorcycle lineup at the motorcycle demo. They saw the American Motor Drome Company live "Wall of Death"[51] shows, where daredevils would risk life and limb to thrill and entertain.

[51] *The Wall of Death or motordrome, is a carnival sideshow featuring a barrel-shaped wooden cylinder, inside which motorcyclists travel along the vertical wall and perform stunts. They are held in place by friction and centrifugal force.*

Downtown Sturgis during the event

Back at the cabins that week, we discovered that the Sturgis event used webcams strategically placed to show a bird's eye view of everything happening there. We caught glimpses of Dozrguy in the company of some unknown cute female during the week, on the four separate web cam images. He would eventually return to the cabins in the company of a gal named Michigan Mary riding in a sidecar he had purchased in Sturgis. A guy named MT trailed behind them on a Sportster. MT heard about Project Granite on the Interwebs. He was a huge fan of Starhatch, and wanted to come along and find out if his help was needed. At the campfire that night the motorcycle gypsy now returned, proceeded to tell a story that might have been titled, "The Excellent Adventures of Dozrguy and Michigan Mary".

To hear him tell the story, his first day as he sat in a bar with his buddies planning their activities for the week, a group of gals came in and one sat next to him. At one point, she turned to Dozrguy and asked him, "Are you a real biker?" He replied, "Well, I've spent my whole life on Harleys. My momma was pregnant with me when she rode on the back of my Daddy's Harley, and then as a little boy, I rode behind my Daddy until I finally got my own Harley. I've been riding a Harley ever since. So yeah, I guess I am a real biker." They chatted some and then she left in the company of her friends "to do some shopping around town and have their nipples pierced", she offered.

The next day Dozrguy stopped at the local Harley Shop to have his bike repaired. They couldn't fix the Harley while he waited, but as he was staying nearby, he decided to walk back to the campground. On the trip back, he stopped to buy supplies for his camping group. At the hardware store, he bought a bucket, an ax, and a chopping block. He then stopped at the livestock store and picked up a couple of chickens and a duck. Dozrguy struggled outside the last store, trying to figure out how to carry his purchases back home.

While he was scratching his head thinking, the gal from the previous day at the bar approached him, who was now heavily loaded with her own bags of store purchases. She mentioned that she was shopping with her girlfriends but became separated and she was now lost. She requested directions from him to her motel room on Lazelle Street.

Dozrguy offered, "Sure it's on my way, and I would walk you back, but I can't seem to figure out how to carry all these things." The gal then suggested, "Why don't you put the ax in your belt, the chopping block in the bucket, carry the bucket in one hand, put a chicken under each arm and carry the duck in your other hand?"

"Why thank you for the tip", he said and proceeded to walk the very creative and practical gal to her room.

Along their way through town, he offered, "Let's use this short cut through the alley". The little gal looked him over cautiously and exclaimed, "I am a single woman alone without a husband to defend me. How do I know when we are in the alley you won't hold me up against the wall, pull up my skirt, and have your way with me?"

Dozrguy yelled, "Holy smokes lady! I am carrying a bucket, a chopping block, two chickens, and a duck. How in the world could I possibly hold you up against the wall and do that?"

The gal replied, "Set the duck down, cover him using the bucket, put the chopping block on top of the bucket, and I'll hold the chickens". That gal was Michigan Mary, and they became inseparable ever after.

Dozrguy, now having Mary's help, dove back into their RealOS work at the cabins.

Via email, the group decided to join the Guy Fawkes mask group at Burning Man during the August 30-September 7 party in Nevada's Black Rock Desert. There they would help hammer the final code to fix any remaining problems during the event. A road trip would become necessary during which they could accomplish additional beta testing and code fixing. Their common goal was to produce a solid RealOS version that provided computer users an upgrade from Windows 7 rather than another MS downgrade.

Having now completed the twelfth step of his program, Colakid would join them on this road trip adventure.

In the few remaining weeks, they needed to code and test before heading off to Burning Man. They needed to focus now. The trip would require significant time, and they couldn't be sure how much work would get done along the way due to the planned side trips to visit the world's largest ball of twine, the Alamo, the Pinball Hall of Fame in Las Vegas, and the other possibly distracting roadside attractions along the way.

Hwrx developed a functional Media Center program now, and was streaming audio and video media from the fiber connection. I hacked a TV satellite connection and we could watch the Cubs games, essentially the whole MLB package, and TV shows like Justified, Hell on Wheels, The Walking Dead, and others.

Nigthhawk and Chuck, don't even think or dream of calling me Charles, now deep into building a relational file system, showed us a few demos to solicit our feedback. They showed us how to display, sort, and filter, text and rich media files in 3D thumbnails; using subject, author, and month as examples. They also continued to work on adding some secret new features.

RealOS 3D photo thumbnails Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

JNC and Renee created a beautiful fully functional and configurable Aero Glass interface working, gaining the assistance from BBBB, and Dozrguy, of course with Michigan Mary at his side. Via video conference working remotely with VJJ, they also roughed out the various interface elements. They demonstrated how the OS would display common website data via the web browser using the internal relational file system.

RealOS 3D webpages Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

Preferreduser assembled, and I tested the beta code we planned to take along on the trip. I created draft documentation on how the beta code worked. Having the assistance of Brad's people, we also comprehensively tested existing windows software programs for compatibility, as well as the required hardware device drivers. Brad's group brought with them a wide range of third party software, as well as hardware input and output devices for our use in testing the software drivers.

The Lake of the Woods group continued to monitor the MS Insider forum. MS decided to extend the forum well into the future due to continual updates, and twice yearly Win10 upgrades planned. They needed to keep as many of the 5 million Insiders involved in perpetual testing and fixing, which their plan and the resultant sloppy programming produced, and would require.

Users continued to complain bitterly in the forums about the ugly nonfunctional interface, lack of functionality, the slow load time of Apps, and missing or hidden configuration options.

JNC and Renee called a meeting at the main cabin, with Renee appearing via video conference. They opened the meeting by giving a primer on user interfaces.

Skeuomorphic design[52] is a concept that has accompanied many waves of technological advancement. The basic principle of skeuomorphism is to design a technology that retains some likenesses of its predecessors. The intention is to guide the user through its operation. A basic example used in many computer interfaces is the notion of a page, a picture, a folder, or a recycle bin. These ideas are holdovers from a traditional analog physical office environment, which help guide the user through their actions inside a digital computer interface.

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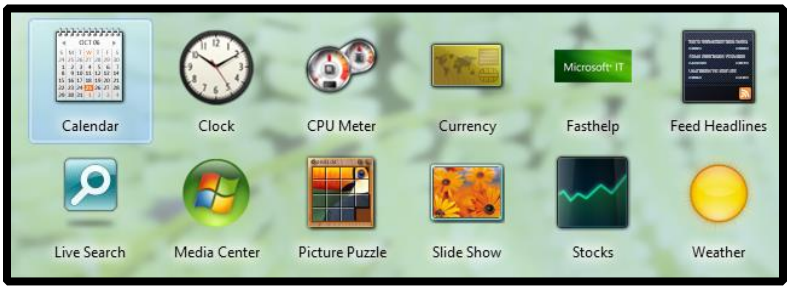
[52] *Apple Inc. under the direction of Steve Jobs became known for its skeuomorphic designs. After his death, debate over skeuomorphism resulted in the resignation of Scott Forstall, the most vocal and high-ranking proponent of the visual design style. Apple designer Jonathan Ive took over and moved the company toward a less skeuomorphic aesthetic, shifting from skeuomorphism to a simplified design, beginning the so-called "death of skeuomorphism".*



Skeuomorphic designed icons

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

A skeuomorph is a derived object that retains visual cues from the original item. These types of objects were previously used effectively from Windows 3.0 on, having been originated much earlier at Xerox PARC. The strength of two dimensional or 2D, skeuomorphic design is how this makes it easier for those familiar with the original device to use the digital emulation. This in turn makes certain memory connections stronger. Because interactions with computer devices are cultural in nature and learned, once a process is learned it is rarely unlearned.

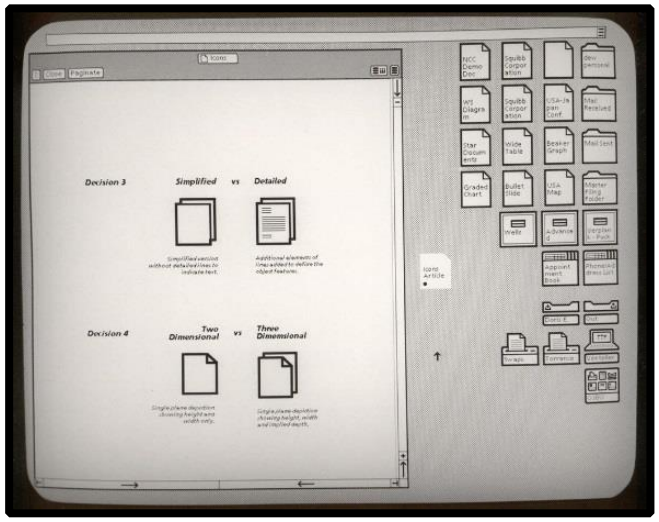
One-dimensional flat design is a minimalist UI design genre, or design language, currently used in various graphical user interfaces such as web sites or web applications. These are the opposite of skeuomorphic design.

Arguments against skeuomorphic design are that the interface elements:

- Use metaphors which are more difficult to operate
- Use up more screen space than standard interface elements
- Break operating system interface design standards
- Causes an inconsistent look and feel between applications
- That skeuomorphic interface elements rarely incorporate numeric input or feedback for accurately setting a value
- That many users may not have experience with the original device being emulated

- That skeuomorphic design can increase cognitive load due to introducing visual noise
- That after a few uses, it gives little or no additional value to the user
- That skeuomorphic design limits creativity by grounding the experience to physical counterparts and represents dumbing down the OS to the lowest common denominator, the inexperienced or first time user

JNC and Renee explained how they would overcome these arguments in designing the RealOS default 2D and optional 3D interface. They showed slides of interface progress over the past OS versions on the market. They ranged from the original greyscale design of the Xerox Star, and its color descendants from both Microsoft and Apple.



The Xerox Star interface Image Courtesy: Xerox.com

In creating RealOS they explained, "We want to move in a forward direction, while building on the past. This idea mirrored interface progress over the past twenty years, until the advent of the current windows versions. The one-dimensional design of the current windows flat look incorporates most of the problems of skeuomorphic design and then adds more to them."

Graphic user interface historical progression

In personal computing, 3D interaction is a type of human to machine interaction where users are able to move and perform interactions inside a 3D screen space. Within the user interface or UI, a computer user interacts with the computer within a three-dimensional space. Computer users and their machines process information where the physical positions of user interface elements appear within this 3D space.

The 3D space used for interaction is a virtual space representation, simulated within the computer. When this space is used for data input, users perform actions or initiate commands using an input device that detects the users 3D position. The device can be a keyboard, mouse, finger, pen, a hand, head gesture, or verbal speech. This becomes a more intuitive interaction, because users routinely interact in three dimensions inside the real world.

Tasks performed within a virtual space through interaction techniques using these devices, are classified as navigation, selection, and manipulation. These tasks deal with the control of the software application itself. A consistent and efficient connection between techniques and the interactive devices allow for a two-way communication between users and a computer system inside of this 3D space.

Users experience a sense of presence when engaged using their natural intrinsic knowledge of how information exchange takes place using physical objects within the real world. Texture, sound, digital ink, touch, and speech can be used to augment 3D interaction.

The RealOS optional 3D alternative to the Classic 2D interface

The Real Desktop 3D interface of RealOS provides an ordinary desktop with new life, and the fascinating dynamics created by the revolutionary graphic renderings on your desktop. This allows the user entry into a living three-dimensional computer world. Icons behave like real objects that can be touched and moved as if they were sitting on a physical desk.

The RealOS 3D UI alternative – a closer view

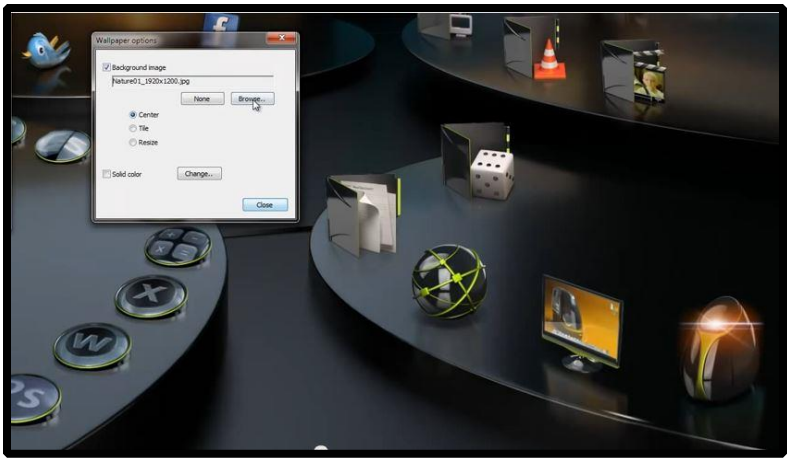
Dialog boxes, file folders, and device windows follow the rounded corner, adjustable window borders, scroll bar, and include the translucent blur of the Aero Glass look.

The Aero Glass look

AERO is an acronym meaning Authentic, Energetic, Reflective, and Open. Aero Glass itself is a hardware-based premium visual graphical user interface experience. AERO includes effects like a translucent glass window design to create depth on the desktop, and glass window borders allow the user to focus on the contents of the open windows. This also includes subtle window and mouse cursor animations to accompany minimizing, maximizing, and the repositioning of windows, to make it smooth and effortless.

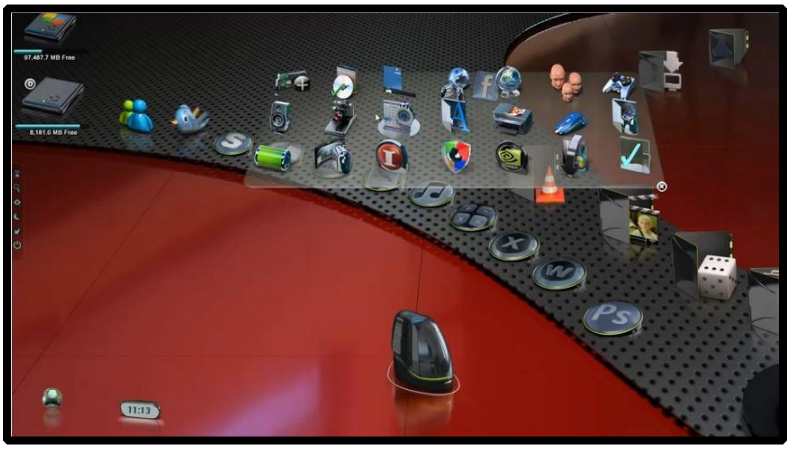
AERO also includes fine-tuning of the color and appearance of the windows, Start menu, and Taskbar by tinting the translucent windows. The user can select an already provided color, or use the color mixer to create their own custom color. Aero Glass also includes Taskbar previews for open windows. When the user points to a taskbar button, they view a thumbnail-sized preview of the window. This remains true whether the content of the window is a document, a photo, a running video, a webpage, or even streaming video content.

RealOS also has the ability to configure wallpaper and colors, and provides real choices to the end user!

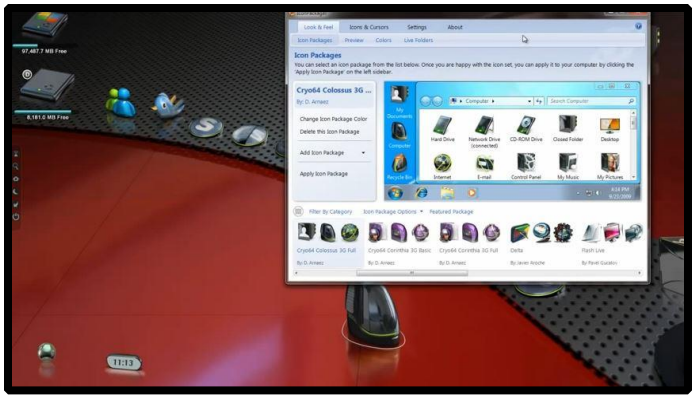


Changing background images

The RealOS also has the ability to customize icons.



Fully customizable icon library



Granular and extensible customization of interface elements

The team also showed off their working demo of the RealOS virtual desktop manager that delivers a fashionable cube effect to your 2D desktop. This feature gives you the room for storing your icons and the windows you need for your day-to-day work and play, they explained. This also eliminates desktop clutter to give the user the ability to store windows and desktop icons across multiple virtual desktops.

RealOS virtual desktop manager

Following this meeting, a consensus formed among the group that they were now ready for further beta testing. They would assign the Burning Man Guy Fawkes Mask group work on coding additional functionality and some new modules for the RealOS.

A plan unfolded that Nigthhawk and Chuck, don't even think or dream of calling me Charles, would stay back at Lake of the Woods and continue coordinating builds with Renee, Ami, and VJJ, via teleconference.

Travel plans now needed to be made. Recently, we accidently discovered that Colakid had a long lost uncle who worked as a roadie for Willie Nelson and his band. He arranged for us to use his bus, as Willie had stopped touring at least for now. A plan was developed to make a stop in Texas along the way to pick up Willie's bio-fuel bus equipped with a solar generator and satellite dish, and then head off to the Burning Man event in the Nevada desert. We would drive my van to Spicewood, Texas 1800 miles from Lake of the Woods and then drive the bus another 1700 miles to the desert.

Meanwhile, I decided that I wanted Walleye for breakfast and took our small rented boat out alone early the next morning. Using my favorite bait of leeches, I hooked what felt and appeared to be a feisty ten-pound Walleye. While holding the fishing pole high with my left hand to keep tension applied to the fish, I reached blindly into the boat using my right hand for a landing net and scooped the fish up out of the water. While not looking, I inadvertently grabbed a small trout net, and instead of the fish going down into the net, he now laid sideways atop the frame as I lifted it out of the water. For a split second, I stared into those big Walleye eyes, and he stared back at me and before I could manage to pull it into the boat, he spit out the hook and with a flip of its tail jumped off the net frame, and back into the water. I guess I will have Wheaties for breakfast again, I cursed. Time to get off this lake and travel to the desert playa, I mused. *To be continued…*

Lefty was unceremoniously banned from the Insider forum, due to an exchange with the same moderator that got Cool Hand barred. There was a core group of a dozen plus malcontents, now banished forever to A.User status. This felt surprisingly similar to the Group W bench,[53] he thought.

Banned Insiders

Searching the forum for a banned member's user profile, an Insider would receive a *User Not Found* message.

> *User Not Found*
>
> *We are sorry we weren't able to find the user you are looking for.*

This happened for each of them.

Lefty

Preferreduser

Hwrx

J Hanley

Feeltheforceluke

Shortly, JNC sent Lefty an email message that included a cartoon.

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[53] *"Kid, I want you to go over and sit down on that bench that says 'Group W'. Group W is where they put you if you may not be moral enough to join the army after committin' your special crime. There was all kinds of mean, nasty, ugly-lookin' people on the bench there" … Arlo Guthrie, Alice's Restaurant*

Lefty replied:
*"The glass, already half empty, chipped, I cut my lip on it, so I am angry **and** bleeding,—now you have warmed the beer as well."*

"Leadership is the ability to go from disaster to disaster with unflagging enthusiasm" - Winston Churchill

Lefty and JNC, aka Cool Hand, communicated over the phone a few times during these forum user banishments and one time Cool Hand asked if he knew the story about the end of the world. Lefty told him that he did not know that there was one, so he said no. and JNC then offered this tale:

> God called the three most influential people in the world together for a meeting, this included Barrack Obama, Vladimir Putin, and Bill Gates. At this meeting, God told them the world was going to end in seven days. He continued that he was very sorry to have to reveal this, but go back and tell your people the news.
>
> First, Obama speaks to the American people and says I have good news and bad news. The good news is that God is alive and well, and the bad news is that the world is going to end in seven days.
>
> Second, Putin tells the Russian people he has bad news and worse news. The bad news is that we were

wrong about that whole God thing, and the worse news is that the world is going to end in seven days.

Lastly, Gates addresses the Microsofties and says I have good news and better news. The good news is God thinks that I am one of the three most influential people in the world, and the better news is that we don't have to worry anymore about fixing Windows 10.

On the Monday before the Wednesday launch, back into the forum under another new user profile, Lefty posted what essentially was a summary of his now ten-month experience as an Insider.

Why I will not downgrade to Windows 10…ever

1. *It watches, listens, and records what you do. All modern computers do this to some extent, but this has now been taken to a whole new level. Not just eavesdropping of data via keylogging, but also the ongoing surveillance of metadata. The seemingly harmless term "Cloud" actually means data transfer to the Microsoft servers in their datacenters for the mining of consumer information. Once there, it is available for resale to third parties, and provision to the government, as well as any bad guys who decide to hack this centralized (one stop shopping) unencrypted database.*
2. *The Cortana App cannot be easily disabled or removed. It has very limited value as a productivity tool, and is primarily a data collection tool. If NSA can turn on your cellphone, so can Microsoft turn on Cortana to monitor you. You cannot remove the battery from Cortana. Software that cannot be configured or easily uninstalled is Malware.*[54]
3. *The Store App cannot be easily disabled or removed. It is being used to display ads to get you to buy things. Software that cannot be configured or easily uninstalled is Malware.*
4. *The Xbox App cannot be easily disabled or removed. If I want to play games and I don't, I will get a gaming console*

[54] *Malware or malicious software is any software that disrupts computer operation, gathers sensitive information, or gains access to private computer systems and therefore acts against the best interests of the user.*

like an Xbox. Software that cannot be configured or easily uninstalled is Malware.

5. *The OneDrive App cannot be easily disabled or removed. I will store My data on MY servers not Microsoft servers. Software that cannot be configured or easily uninstalled is Malware.*
6. *Search cannot be configured for local searches only. I do not want to send all my search info to the Bing database. If I want to search the web, I will search in a browser with a search engine like DuckDuckGo or StartPage that do not record what you search for. (Snowden's NSA Revelations helped DuckDuckGo grow 600 percent from 2013 to serving 3 billion searches per year.)*
7. *XAML is a MS user interface markup language to define UI elements, data binding, and events. It is a programming language for web pages and far too limited and ineffective for the interface of an OS on a powerful desktop PC.*
8. *What can be configured in the OS is now subject to being changed with each update. Apps that are uninstalled are automatically reinstalled, Sports, Food and Drink, Get Skype, Money, etc. Preventing the reversal of your configuration settings would require constant and time consuming vigilance, likely more than every second Tuesday of each month as we have been accustomed to.*
9. *System updates that cannot be controlled by the user or the administrator is a violation of trust and can cause operational issues. Microsoft has already proven itself untrustworthy by disguising the Windows 10 upgrade notification as a security update.*
10. *The Apps replacing Win32 software utility programs are ugly, screen space hogs, slow, with limited functionality including in some cases the inability to run more than one instance. This is especially important for virtual desktops.*
11. *The interface itself is flat, lifeless, and lacks the basic requirements of visually identifying the window borders, scroll bars, and windows focus. The icons and buttons do not represent any real world objects from the Luna or Aero Glass interfaces of the past 15 years, and are difficult to identify and operate.*
12. *The Edge browser has extremely limited functionality compared to IE and cannot be disabled or uninstalled.*

Many links default to Edge even if using Internet Explorer, or Firefox. You can't turn this off. Software that cannot be configured or easily uninstalled is Malware.

13. *The modified Windows 8 Start Screen which is now used, is not a Start Menu. It lacks the utility and configurability of what we have had for twenty years due to the limitations of the XAML programming language. It requires workarounds or the addition of third party shell replacements to make it somewhat functional. Because they are not integrated, these third party replacements are subject to being rendered inoperable with each new biannual or more often Windows update.*
14. *The Settings App is not only ugly, weak, and ineffective, it is so crippled that it requires Microsoft to continue to maintain the Control Panel dividing configuration setting into an illogical, unpractical, and confusing split.*
15. *The removal of long included utility programs like HyperTerminal, Solitaire, accessories like a good collection of fonts, and features, which now require the purchase of additional software or are in fact irreplaceable like the Media Center program.*
16. *The refusal to advance the state of the art, improve malware and firewall protections especially in light of the huge problems these cause for users.*
17. *The refusal to advance the state of the art on data encryption protections on static (local) and dynamic (email and web) data especially in light of the Snowden revelations. If it were on the side of users, MS would facilitate end to end encryption in every way it could.*
18. *The refusal of Microsoft to advance the state of the art on relational file systems, for the most powerful PC hard disk and CPU hardware in history. Instead they embrace this ill-conceived and faddish Mobile First strategy for the benefit of the four inch screen phone people.*
19. *The refusal of Microsoft to advance the state of the art on three dimensional interface design, for the most powerful PC graphics hardware in history due to this ill-conceived faddish Mobile First strategy for the four inch screen phone people.*
20. *The refusal of Microsoft to provide a comprehensive installation routine which allows the customization of Windows to suit the user or administrator needs. I want*

this without having to modify the registry via group policies or build images for installations.

21. *The refusal of Microsoft to listen to many hundreds if not many hundreds of thousands brilliant, experienced and loyal users. They provided reasoned, logical, extensively detailed, and sometimes humorous, feedback over a ten month Preview program. This does not bode well for the future development of this OS.*

"There is no cloud, only other people's servers." - Found on Twitter

Insider forum messages continued to complain.

By Martin Brinkmann on June 1 in Windows - Windows 7 & 8.1 users who have started their system today may have noticed a new update notification in the operating system's system tray area that allows them to reserve an upgrade to Microsoft's upcoming operating system Windows 10.

On the day before the Win10 launch winbeta.org reported the news.

"Microsoft has started pushing Windows 10 out to PCs in preparation of its July 29th launch tomorrow. Those who reserved their free upgrade will begin to pre-download the bits today, and many in the United States and other areas have already started receiving the pre-download.
Some eagle eyed users have found that their GWX folder is now filling up with the Windows 10 bits, and many already have the .ESD which contains the entire Windows 10 operating system for installation starting July 29th. It was revealed a couple of months ago that Windows 10 would automatically be pre-downloaded before the launch date to avoid day one server struggles. The pre-download appears to be happening automatically with no prior warning, so don't worry if you've not noticed anything different yet."

You have now apparently ceded control over your machine to Microsoft, and this is a clear violation of the Hacker Ethic[55] , thought Lefty.

[55] The original Hacker ethic has been passed down from its origin at the advent of the PDP-1.The first principal is called the "hands-on imperative" which is the belief that there can be no substitute for direct control over a computer, its inner workings, its operating system, and its software.

Microsoft now controls your machine

MS extended the launch event to 190 countries and held localized events at some MS retail stores. There was no big launch event this time, no webcast, and practically no news coverage for the first time in memory. A few ads ran on TV, but were remarkably low key as if they were expecting an adverse reaction. The lack of hype did not seem to match the projected goal of one billion users over four years' time.

On the launch date, the forums blew up with the messages of frustrated users, which increased from the usual two or three pages per day to as many as twenty pages per day for the next few weeks. Issues included Win10 killed my computer, Internet connection problems, not being able to control updates, password and activation problems, cannot roll back to previous Windows version, and other things not working.

The Sydney Windows 10 launch event Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

WinBeta.org, a usual Microsoft cheerleader and apologist, uncharacteristically wrote:

> *"Complaints and issues range from odd update code errors and missing driver support to users attempting to avoid automatic updates. Most Windows Insiders understand the nature of today's Windows 10 release as being a semi-finished product. According to Microsoft, Windows 10 will continue to be a work in progress. With a rapid release cycle in place for development, the Windows 10 team hopes to address issues as quickly as possible over days and weeks rather than traditional Windows development of months and years. Unfortunately, informed Windows Insiders do not make up the majority of Windows users."*
> *"We reported on a laundry list of issues that the Windows team are aware of in this build, and the updates coming to fix some of them in the coming days. Hopefully, the Windows team is working on fixes for some of the unique issues our readers and Windows users, in general, are experiencing."*
> *"There are mountains of complaints building in the comment sections of various publications as well in forums. With Microsoft adopting a "quick release" cycle for Windows 10, we can only hope the Windows team develops engineer fixes, patches and workarounds for troubled users in the coming days."*

Microsoft displayed signage changes on the Redmond campus, for the product launch.

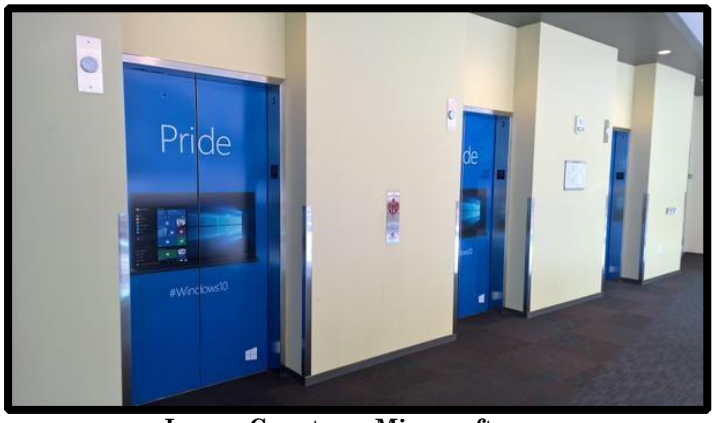

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

An Insider forum member posted a response.

Image Courtesy: Insider Forum

A week after the launch, using a new Microsoft account or MSA and user profile, Lefty posted a discussion question and received a single response, perhaps indicative of the fear, uncertainty and doubt, or FUD, around the subject.

Unbreakable end-to-end encryption

Lefty started on August 2

"Meanwhile, Apple, and Google are currently rolling out user-friendly end-to-end encryption for their customers, many of whom have demanded greater privacy protections — especially following Snowden's disclosures."

Why isn't Microsoft doing this, and why aren't its customers demanding it?

"Don't pee in my ear and tell me it's raining." Anonymous

Hello Lefty,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from DavidLessnau.

Title: Unbreakable end-to-end encryption

Reply A lot of us ARE demanding it. But many conjecture that Microsoft 1) wants to make money selling us stuff based on the information it farms from us via the OS, 2) wants to sell the information the OS gathers about us to other companies, and 3) wants to appease the NSA.

The real voyage of discovery lies not in seeking new lands, but in seeing with new eyes. Marcel Proust

The bad news kept coming, now including computer security sites like KnowBe4.

"Regarding Win10, I would hold off upgrading your users until a LOT of field testing has been done. I am running it on a machine at the house and there are good reasons not to rush into the upgrade, because of some new features like the "Windows Update Delivery Optimization (WUDO) which works like bit torrents do, and makes your Win10 machine part of a peer-to-peer network delivering Win10 to other users using your bandwidth, and the new "Wi-Fi Sense" which makes Wi-Fi more available and accessible - for better or for worse.

In theory, someone who wanted access to your company network could befriend an employee or two, and drive into your office parking lot to be in range, and then gain access to your wireless network. See Brian Krebs' post about it.

Also, apart from being a "security upgrade", Win10 also grabs all information it can get its hands on, this version is incredibly intrusive by default. Just open Settings and click on Privacy. There, you'll find 13 different screens — yes, 13

— to go through, and you'll want to disable anything that seems worrying, you should definitely adjust what types of data each app on that box can access."

Then back in the Insider forum.

Aug 4th, Just on the phone with Windows support!

Tampa Bay A started on August 4

1.6 Hours with 3 Diff "Microsoft Support" levels today to try and fix the W10 b10240 activation problem that I have like so many other Insiders! had b10240 dl the day it was available in early July. On the 29th of July there was no WU RTM or new build that they said as per (G.A.) would be offered. Instead they gave us an W10 iso. that we dl'd from the "media creation Tool"! it was the same build we already had. So many like me dl'd and did a clean install. Now we cannot activate this install.

From the 1.6 hours of conversation, I still cannot get activated and the help support from MS had no clue how to fix this at this time!..... just a case # and "can we help you with anything else"? bla,bla,bla!

"Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out." - Vaclav Havel

First Amazon, now Microsoft:

Macklemore visits Redmond for private Windows 10 concert by Taylor Soper on August 10

It appears that Macklemore & Ryan Lewis are the band of choice for Seattle tech giants this summer.

After performing last month at a private concert for thousands of Amazon.com employees at CenturyLink Field, the Seattle rap group was in Redmond today for a Microsoft-sponsored concert celebrating the launch of Windows 10.

Then MS thanked the Insiders for their testing.

> *Rick-M replied on August 4*
>
> *The key point is bolded here.*
>
> *The insiders program will continue once the RTM roll out process has been completed. The next phase of testing for Windows 10 will resume after that, probably about mid-August. As for upgrading your window 7 or 8 to 10, you must remember that you will have until July to do that, so you do not need to worry about missing the "Free" upgrade path right now. To receive your RTM version of Windows 10 you must be upgrading from Windows 7 SP1 or Windows 8.1 or purchase a separate license for Windows 10.* ***Your Insiders Beta Version of Windows 10 is not a path to receiving RTM version for free.*** *You may want to check out your Insider Hub App or go to the Windows Blog Site for more info.*
>
> "From here to there and there to here, funny things are everywhere." - Dr. Seuss

Beta testers would ***not*** receive a complimentary copy of the software they beta tested, for the first time ever. Lefty recalled the Warren Haynes song lyric, "*That's the way it is here in broken promise land."*

Crafty Insiders discovered alternate ways of joining up by using what appears to be precisely the same name as someone else. There are a large number of alternate characters within the Unicode character set that look exactly as the regular characters do, but to a computer they are completely different. You could be, srfrẹ ẹ man, or srfrėėman, or srfreėman, or srfrėeman. There is also the possibility of using one of Microsoft's newest emoticon glyphs in a seemingly appropriate fashion—💩srfreeman💩.

Lefty posted another story in the Insider Forum, the first for a while, as he kept himself busy with other things over the summer working outdoors. His original profile remained blocked. He did not want his current profile blocked, so he used a profile handle of Drew1905 (a name banned from use in our posts) to mock the infamous clueless moderator Drew1903. VJJ had previously used Drew1904, in a similar Bronx tribute.

Lefty received a forum message shortly after.

Hello Drew1905, A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from Techie007L.

Title: There is not a single redeeming thing about Windows 10, is there?

Yet another "Drew"—you guys are hilarious! ROFL

Intermission

Authors note: Ok, so this story is getting a bit long winded and intense here now, but the good news is that you are half way there. But before we see Lefty take off on another road trip adventure, take a break. Get some fresh air, take a nap, get a drink of water or perhaps something stronger, and rest your mind for a bit. You will need your energy for the conclusion of these adventures.

Elwood: It's 106 miles to Chicago, we've got a full tank of gas, half a pack of cigarettes, it's dark and we're wearing sunglasses.

Jake: Hit it!

The Blues Brothers movie

Insider Story 1000

The traveling road trip group now consisting of myself, Hwrx, JNC, BBBB, preferreduser, MT, Michigan Mary, and Dozrguy, his Harley with sidecar on the trailer behind my van. With the addition of a freshly rehabilitated and now *caffeine-free* Colakid who was clearly excited about the freedom of a road trip, we headed out for our next adventure.

Driving southward, we traveled from the northern cool at Lake of the Woods, towards the anticipated oppressive heat in Spicewood, Texas. Following I-29 and I-35, under planned construction during the summer, Google Maps had warned us. August seems to be the perfect time for this trip, not, I thought.

Crossing the border into the US at Emerson came with some trepidation, recalling our previous RCMP run-in[56]. Once across however, we crossed Minnesota passing the Mississippi River headwaters. We rolled through the forestlands of Paul Bunyan fame, past the Iron Range homeland of Robert Zimmerman aka Bob Dylan, and on through the Red River valley of North Dakota and into South Dakota.

[56] *See Colakid's previous adventures in the Canadian hoosegow, the RCMP chase, coming close to being trampled by horses and being kicked and splattered with horse dung during the event, being held in jail, the group W bench, Officer Dudley's police reports with the seventeen five-by-seven color glossy photographs with circles and arrows and writing on the back explaining each, and all of that.*

Image Courtesy: maps.google.com

Our merry band of brothers stopped in Sioux Falls, South Dakota at a chain restaurant for a PAPA burger lunch and left carrying a gallon jug of draft root beer.

We made another quick stop in Nebraska to speak with some Native American tribes protesting the proposed Keystone XL pipeline expansion across their lands. We had previously seen the news of an alliance of many indigenous groups who recently approved a manifesto, which stated emphatically that no pipeline would be allowed within the borders of South Dakota. These tribes stood ready to protect their "sacred water" and other natural resources at all costs we heard from Colakid, who is one-quarter Native American.

In South Dakota, the home if many of the nation's poorest Native American tribes, they are preparing for a nonviolent battle using their "resistance training" aimed at TransCanada. This company wants to

develop a 1,700-mile pipeline according to Spotted Eagle, 65, a Yankton Sioux tribal elder from Lake Andes, S.D. Although organizers want to keep their strategy a secret, they considered prayer vigils, civil disobedience, and blockades as options to thwart movement of construction equipment and the delivery of materials.

Opponents of the pipeline say their women would become easy prey for thousands of temporary construction workers housed at work camps. According to Federal government data, one in three Indian women is either raped or sexually assaulted in her lifetime, the majority of these attacks being committed by non-Native men.

"If you like to drink water, if you like your children not being harmed, if you don't want your women harmed, then say no to the pipeline," Greg Grey Cloud of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe expressed. "Because once this comes it will destroy everything."

These groups are determined not to abandon their goal of killing the pipeline, which they called the "black snake". They believe they hold the ultimate trump card in a President who is an adopted Indian. Barack *Black Eagle* Obama was formally adopted by Hartford and Mary Black Eagle of Montana's Crow Indian Tribe in 2008 when he visited the tribal reservation during his first presidential run.

Preferreduser spoke about how history is still very raw here. "This area is the scene of many of the bloodiest battles between Native Americans and the Federal government, including the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee Creek by the U.S. 7th Cavalry that killed 300 Sioux," he reminded us.

BBBB made a point that this is about much more than pollution of ancestral lands and that this project represents a threat to soil, water and the atmosphere by unleashing greenhouse gases that most scientists link to global climate change. "This is way beyond being only a native issue. This is of course much more than an indigenous issue, a landowner issue, or a treaty issue. It's a survival issue for everyone on this planet."

Protesters and what they are protesting

As they continued their trip, they discussed the pros and cons of the proposed pipeline as they worked to search out and exterminate bugs[57] within the RealOS interface code. The van heading down the road, JNC focused the group back to the task-at-hand and schooled them regarding 3D design, and general interface implementation. He then told them a true story.

"Back in the early 1990's, MS conducted usability tests based on a potential replacement for the Windows 3 operating system. From those tests, it was determined that a propulsion engineer for Boeing, literally a rocket scientist, displayed difficulty using Windows to create a document when first sitting down at a Windows computer."

"MS then hired Danny Oran a trained behavioral psychologist, as the MS brass hoped he would figure out ways to make Windows easier for inexperienced computer users. He was uniquely qualified for this job, because while at Harvard he undertook his first user interface design project for animals, under the supervision of famed behavioral scientist BF Skinner[58]."

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[57] *The term "bug" was first used by computer pioneer Grace Hopper, who wrote an account of a malfunction in an early electromechanical computer. One version of the story is that in 1946, computer operators traced an error in the Mark II computer to a moth trapped in a relay, and coined the term bug.*

[58] *B. F. Skinner was an American psychologist, behaviorist, author, inventor, and social philosopher. Skinner considered free will an illusion and human action was dependent on consequences of previous actions. If the consequences are bad, there is a high chance the action will not be repeated; if the consequences are good, the actions that led to it being repeated become more probable. Skinner called this the principle of reinforcement.*

"One of Oran's first steps was watching how customers used Windows. His team would instruct a test subject on completing some simple task and then watch how they would repeat this task. This immediately became a frustrating experience for them because the Windows programmers became aware that the problem lay in the operating system, and not in the users. The 1995 version of Windows would introduce the world to a single button push, which led them to everything they needed to find. Thus the **Start** button was born."

User discoverability was a valuable lesson learned, but then forgotten or never known by the current breed of programmers. Those weaned on smart phones, and who were responsible for the disastrous development of Windows 8, and now more specifically Windows 10. "Blame the users if they can't figure it out" became the recycled *Vista era* mantra at MS once again, despite the fact that this idea had previously met with an utter failure in the computer marketplace.

The RealOS group had done some usability testing locally, and would conduct more at Burning Man using a random sample from the sixty thousand attendees.

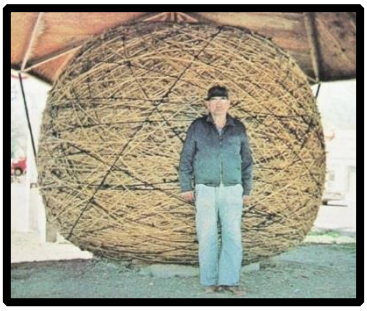
To break the monotony of the long trip to Texas, we made some sightseeing stops and visited a few roadside attractions, which included the world's largest ball of twine, located in Cawker City, Kansas. According to their website, a fellow named Frank Stoeber, a local dairy farmer, began making the ball around 1953. As his project grew, Frank kept the Ball of Twine inside his barn outside of Cawker City. His neighbors upon learning of his project started sharing their leftover twine. He kept careful record of the progress of the ball as it grew, as he carefully weighed the ball frequently. At one point, the Ball was taken to the Mitchell County Fair in Beloit, Kansas, where fairgoers make guesses on its weight.

Now having outgrown his barn, Frank moved the ball into town for the Cawker City's Kansas Centennial parade. As an obvious tourist attraction, Stoeber requested that the city's Chamber of Commerce build a shelter to house his ball along U.S. Highway 24. The city agreed, and the Ball found itself a home at its present

location. Until his death in 1974, Frank continued adding twine to the Ball.

We pulled off the interstate highway to investigate the "attraction", many hundreds of miles away from anything else. I commented that this countryside looks like a John Mellencamp music video without the sound as I slipped a Mellencamp hits mix cd into the vans stereo system.

Located in north central Kansas Cawker City, along U.S. Highway 24, is poised on the shores of Wauconda Lake near Glen Elder State Park. The "ball" at 18,000 pounds (1300 miles) is everything you would have thought and more, a huge stinky ball of twine. The countryside we traveled to arrive was beautiful and the people amiable. They offered twine allowing us "tourists" to add to the giant ball. Now 1300 miles and counting, after the group of computer geeks, led by Dozrguy and the ever-present Michigan Mary, added their participation walking around and around the ball holding a spool of new sisal[59] twine.



Frank with his ball and its own weather station

Exhausted due to the driving and the sightseeing, we decided to stay at the Ball of Twine Inn for the evening. We enjoyed our dinner of Kansas raised steaks, and Idaho baked potatoes. Later at the bar over a

[59] *The ball contains exclusively sisal twine, made from the fibrous agave plant grown in tropic or sub tropic areas. Sisal twine is best known as being used for keeping small rectangular hay bales together for storage, and later wintertime cow feeding.*

White Russian or two, the bartender known as String, regaled our group with tales of the summer Twine Festival and the origin of the ball. According to String, the story went that Frank was ill and decided that rolling his abundance of excess twine, saved from years of feeding his cows hay bales, into a ball would be good exercise and something to occupy his time. Thus, began the making the World's Largest Ball of Twine. The barkeep also told stories of the town founder E.H. Cawker, who in 1870 got the town named after himself as the result of the outcome of a poker game between the original community residents.

A Twine-A-Thon festival is held the third weekend in August downtown at Cawker City Park. The annual event includes a parade, cook-off, picnic, poker run, golf tournament, as well as a horseshoe tournament, according to Linda C. the Show Director. "The primary purpose of this event is for fun, while continuing to add twine to stave off the competition of other Minnesota and Missouri towns who desperately wanted to claim the largest ball title." She added, "Adding twine to the World's Largest Ball of Twine brings in a good crowd each year to Cawker City."

Now rolling through Oklahoma traveling the road to Texas, our Merry Band of Misfits and Malcontents continued their tutoring by JNC on the proposed optional 3D interface for RealOS. Renee, Amii, and VJJ listened in, commenting from their locations via the mobile conference link.

"We live and act inside a 3D world, but the physical world contains many more cues for recognition than can currently be represented accurately on a computer screen. Great care must be put into the design of user interfaces or UIs, and the interaction techniques for 3D application programs."

"We've determined that a 3D user interface is important for its natural intuitive features, which brings about an improvement for the user. A good user interface can transform the user's behavior and state, into an expression which the computer can process, and where users can directly carry out tasks inside a 3D space. Its visual focus is like a free camera angle lens, which users can self-control the direction of the visual

angle. He then sent his PowerPoint slide deck onto the vans large screen.

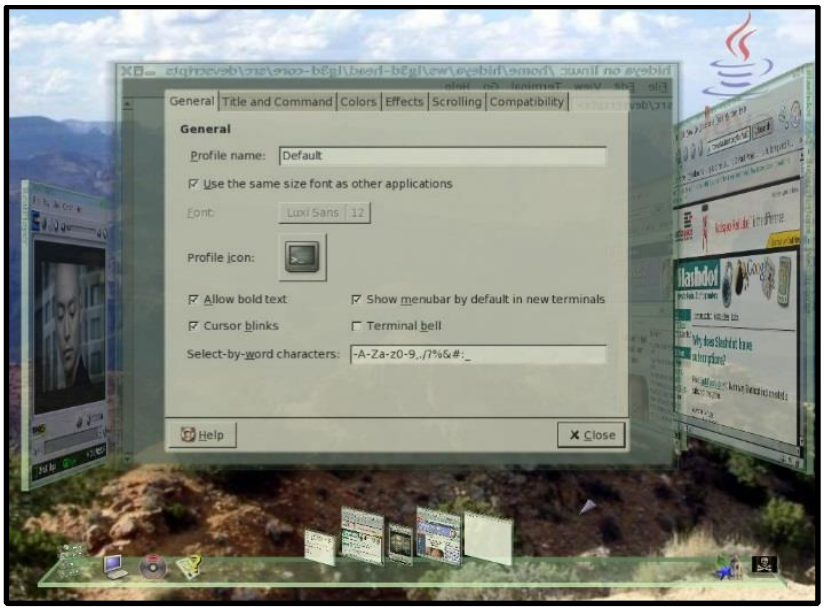
Navigation of the UI is put into three categories:

- *Exploration* is navigation having no explicit target. This is where the user simply investigates and explores the onscreen environment.
- *Search are* tasks, involve movement within the UI to a particular target location.
- *Maneuvering are* tasks that are short-range, precision movements, used to place the cursor at the most advantageous location to perform a particular task."

Using the Lake of the Woods satellite video link, Chuck, don't even think or dream of calling me Charles, jumped into the discussion to deliver a point. A 3D UI should not replace the traditional 2D graphical user interface model, for pull-down menus and command line input, but does solve the poor performance of a traditional 2D mode with regard to user interaction. He displayed an onscreen presentation, which compared the 3D interface with the 2D, as he outlined the advantages.

- A 3D scenario enhances the users' capabilities to deal with information, which includes awareness, perception, learning, and memory.
- A 3D UI provides space to organize, and show complex information.
- 3D information visualization makes the display of computer information direct, and understandable.
- On one hand, 3D interaction can introduce natural rich actions from the real world of human-computer interaction; but on the other hand can also show an attractive and interactive way of breaking through real world restrictions.

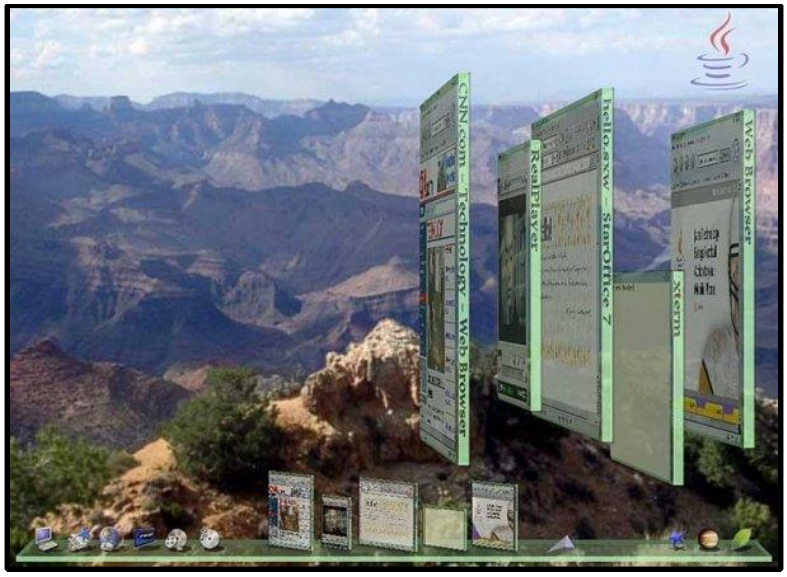
Chuck, don't even think or dream of calling me Charles, continued "however, a 3D UI also has potential shortcomings which are inevitable, such as getting lost within a complex map which can bring disorientation, and require spending time to learn the navigation. Seamless integration of 2D and 3D interaction techniques is what we are after here, from both a physical and logical perspective. Physical integration is important because we don't want any difficulty for users switching between 2D and 3D devices. Logical integration is also important because we want the devices within the application to know whether they are used for 2D or 3D interaction. This context-based information helps reduce the user's effort. We want to build on the work of companies like Sun Microsystems with their Project Looking Glass[60] for example.



Configuring an application using the backside of the window represented as a 3D slate in the 3D space

Image Courtesy: Oracle.com

[60] *Project Looking Glass was a software project to create an innovative 3D desktop environment for Unix, Windows, etc. It was sponsored by Sun Microsystems until finances ran out and it was made inactive in late 2006.*



Tilting the windows to assist the user in selecting the desired one

Image Courtesy: Oracle.com

Nigthhawk chimed in "using more layman terms this means that graphics and visual representation make things easier for the users to recognize and identify the information displayed on their screens. This makes computer users productive, less frustrated, and less confused. This applies to all screens no matter where they are located physically."

I queried Nigthhawk about how things were going back at the cabins, "it's starting to look a lot like fall up north here", he offered. "We would gladly ship you twenty degrees of heat from Texas," I offered.

JNC continued, "Regarding object selection, positioning, and rotation, we provide the user with a 3D cursor in the shape of a human hand. These hand movements then correspond to movements of the mouse or other input device. Selection and manipulation simply involve touching an object, and then positioning the orienting hand within the UI. The virtual hand is intuitive as it simulates a real-world object interaction, but only objects within the area of reach can be picked up. We try our best to prevent mode

errors[61] by providing visual feedback to the user both during and after the selection of a command." 2D interaction on a physical surface provides feedback that is helpful for creating objects, writing, and for annotating.

Reinforcing these points using a practical and visual example, JNC suggested we pull into BJ's Restaurant in Oklahoma City directly across from a Tesla electric car supercharger station. Over a lunch of homemade burgers, fries, and excellent old-fashioned chocolate malts, JNC asked us to keep an eye out the windows for a Tesla[62] Model S to show up. The site held eight superchargers, available 24/7, and so this shouldn't be a long wait the group supposed.

Just as we finished lunch, teased, and tipped the waitress, a Model S pulled up and plugged into the charger, with the driver walking into the restaurant. We asked to look at his car, and he agreed as long as we didn't touch any computer controls. He apparently picked us out as a group of geeks and hackers.

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[61] *Mode errors occur when the user forgets what state the interface is in, performs an action that is appropriate to a different mode, and gets an unexpected and undesired response. A mode error can be quite startling and disorienting as the user copes with the sudden violation of his or her user expectations.*

[62] *Tesla is an American automaker and energy storage company co-founded by Elon Musk, based in Palo Alto, California. The company specializes in electric cars, powertrain components, and produces batteries and battery charging equipment.*

JNC wanted us to pay particular attention to the elegance in design of the entire vehicle, but mainly the computerized dashboard. "Check out how the engineers used skeuomorphism to equate the controls to 'real life' objects. They entice you to want to reach out and touch them," he explained.

Tesla in-dash displays

After a while, the driver came back out curious to investigate what we were up to, and during casual conversation revealed that he worked as a Tesla engineer and was out doing some road testing. We inquired about the design criteria for the digital dash and he offered his thoughts that, "Automobile in-dash displays are traditionally the poster children for poor

user experience or UX design. This one is the antidote, as it is both thoughtfully laid out, and uses intuitive controls inspired from the best software program interfaces available. Most notable is the clean typography, because we used Gotham[63] which is not the most exciting typeface, but is clear, and extremely legible at a variety of sizes and weights, plus like the car, it is American made."

After our captivating side trip, we thanked him for his time and knowledge, and piled into the van. Tesla founder Elon Musk is brilliant enough I thought, that he could be mistaken for an alien from an advanced civilization.

Returning to the road now, the satellite radio tuned to Sirius channel 27 Deep Tracks, was blasting out Tom Petty's "Runnin' Down a Dream".

Having to almost shout over the music, Hwrx spoke about the historical improvement and technical advances of computer system CPU's, graphic GPU's, and a general trend of falling prices for increasingly powerful hardware. He thought that the 3D UI would gradually penetrate into lots of different areas of application. From data browsing, to information visualization, to immersive entertainment like gaming, and of course into the Media Center program he was writing for RealOS.

Hwrx swiped his tablet and via a wireless connection, pushed a couple images of beta 3D interfaces up to the van's teleconference screen which he had found searching on the Internet. He explained that these are similar to the Colossus 3G style we currently used.[64] He also noted that the fact he found these images online provided additional proof we were following the right track in providing 3D, which would soon be available to all computer users.

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[63] *Gotham is a sans-serif digital American designed typeface. Gotham's letterforms are inspired by architectural signage especially popular throughout New York City. Gotham has been used in campaign material, on the cornerstone of the One World Trade Center, and is used in many film trailers. Gotham features four widths, eight weights, and separate designs for screen displays.*

[64] *DesktopX was Starhatchs attempt recreate some of the features related to appearance, which Microsoft had abandoned. Starhatch has since retired the Colossus 3G DesktopX.*

Alternate 3D user interfaces

We crossed the border into Texas following US-67 south, Texas-220 S, then US-281 south and rolled up to Willie's ranch near Spicewood.

To be continued…

Checking the Internet, Lefty noticed that Windows 10 news stories were spreading far and wide across the Interwebs.

Windows 10 upgrade bug makes some PCs unusable

Some consumers trying to upgrade their computers to Windows 10 have run into a bug that is rendering their machines inoperative.

Instead of being able to use Microsoft's new operating system, they get an error that says their computer has a "missing operating system". Some also said their drives reported having nothing on them after the attempted upgrade.

Among those who experienced the bug was Randall Keith, the managing editor for Digital Content for the Bay Area News Group, which publishes SiliconBeat. He ran into it while trying to upgrade his 3-year-old Asus ZenBook laptop, which was running Windows 7. Keith attempted the upgrade after getting a notification from Microsoft prompting him to do so and after using the company's installer to verify that his computer was compatible with the new software.

Instead of a smooth upgrade, he got what might be called the "black screen of death" with the ominous warning message his computer was now missing its operating system. Keith ended up taking his computer to the Microsoft Store in Palo Alto to try to diagnose and solve the problem. The only solutions offered to him were to send the computer off to try to recover the programs and data off the drive or to do a clean installation of Windows 10.

Since the computer wasn't his primary one, Keith chose the latter, but then ran into a second problem — Microsoft no longer recognized that he had a license to use Windows, which he discovered while working with OneDrive when a prompt telling him to go to settings to activate Windows appeared on the screen.

Keith isn't the only one to have the problem. On one Microsoft forum page devoted to the bug, some 25 people reported experiencing the same issue. On Windows 10 Forums, an independent discussion site, a separate thread had attracted more than three dozen posts from users experiencing similar problems.

"Upgrade was going very, very well, and after the installer got to around 89 percent, the computer rebooted", a consumer identified as jhuck5? wrote on the Microsoft forum page. "During the reboot, the BIOS screen appears with a black screen and a message reporting 'Missing Operating System."

A Microsoft representative declined to estimate how many users were affected by the problem or what types of computers it might be affecting. The representative suggested that those who encounter the bug should contact Microsoft's customer support representatives.

"While the vast majority of our customers will be able to seamlessly upgrade, some app or device incompatibilities may exist and will decrease over time," the company representative said.

Several of those who experienced the bug reported using Asus computers. Many also reported having laptops that use flash, or solid-state (SSD) drives.

Microsoft released Windows 10 last week. The software has been praised for addressing the shortcomings of Windows 8, but has also been criticized for raising privacy and security concerns.

Windows 10 receives its second set of fixes with new cumulative update

Written by Kareem Anderson on Wednesday, Aug 5th

It's been rumored and arguably validated by many, that the Windows 10 July 29th release was essentially rushed. Journalists and observers have come up with a myriad of speculative reasons as to why Microsoft may have shifted from its recent tradition of shipping its OS in the fall to mid-summer. The overwhelming theory revolves around appeasing PC OEMs during 'Back to School' season.

Whatever the reason, many Windows users are now running into issues regarding the semi-incomplete nature of Windows 10 currently. Back during the Windows 10 reveal, Microsoft noted that the OS would be a constant 'work in progress'. Microsoft is continuing that trend today with a Service Release 1 (SR1) update. A cumulative update (KB3081424) for Windows 10 is now live and is a collection of fixes and under-the-hood improvements which are said to improve overall performance. However, the main install is intended to address a multitude of post-release issues Windows users are running into.
Today's cumulative update is not the first update for Windows 10. On July 29th, Microsoft released a similar patch which included over 1GB of improvements for new users upgrading from Windows 7 and Windows 8.1.

Windows 10 comes with built-in spyware. If your work requires confidentiality, DO NOT INSTALL.
By OllieGarkey
Friends of mine in government, in law offices, or in doctors' offices often have a work/personal email that comes with a disclaimer. "This communication is confidential," etc., and is intended only for the recipient. It's a bit of legalese, but it's necessary, especially for people who work in finance, law or medicine, who have to comply with some pretty strict confidentiality laws and agreements.
If you have any job or work which requires some kind of legally or professionally-mandated confidentiality, whether it's Doctor-Patient or Attorney-Client, you should not use Windows 10, even on your home machine.
That's because by installing Windows 10, you're agreeing to an End User License Agreement which gives Microsoft permission to read your emails, record your location and activities, log your browsing history and what programs and applications you run, and share these with "trusted" sources. You're also agreeing that Microsoft can turn over the content of those emails along with data about you mined from your computer, to any trusted partner, or to any law enforcement agency based on a "good faith" determination by Microsoft that the content is needed by that agency.
There is no way for an ordinary user to disable these settings. Unless you're familiar with group policy settings, using an elevated command prompt, and editing the computer's registry, there is simply no way to disable Microsoft's data mining system. If you don't have a "Pro" version, you won't

even have access to the group policy editor, and so there will be no way for you to fully disable the pre-installed spyware.

If you don't believe me, here's a direct quote from Microsoft's privacy policy:

> *Finally, we will access, disclose and preserve personal data, including your content (such as the content of your emails, other private communications or files in private folders), when we have a good faith belief that doing so is necessary to:*
>
> *1. Comply with applicable law or respond to valid legal process, including from law enforcement or other government agencies.*
>
> *2. Protect our customers, for example to prevent spam or attempts to defraud users of the services, or to help prevent the loss of life or serious injury of anyone.*
>
> *3. Operate and maintain the security of our services, including to prevent or stop an attack on our computer systems or networks.*
>
> *4. Protect the rights or property of Microsoft, including enforcing the terms governing the use of the services - however, if we receive information indicating that someone is using our services to traffic in stolen intellectual or physical property of Microsoft, we will not inspect a customer's private content ourselves, but we may refer the matter to law enforcement.*

In addition, there's a new telemetry system called "Asimov" which can be used to monitor the usage of any Windows 10 computer in real time, and if you agree to use Windows 10, you agree to let Microsoft monitor your computer at any time, for any reason, and to share any data they gather with their trusted partners. And no, you don't get to know who those partners are. They might even let law enforcement have access to what you're doing in real time. That might include access to your webcam.

For those technically inclined, there's a post over at Reddit which outlines how to partially disable Microsoft snooping system.] There is no guarantee that updates to Windows 10 won't reactivate that system, and no guarantee that the backdoors built into the OS for Microsoft's can't be accessed by government agencies or hackers.

Folks, if this scares you, it should. By using windows, you are asked to agree to the windows privacy policy. By using Windows 10, you're asked to agree to the statement I quoted above.

And if that means that your private files regarding a client end up in the hands of someone else, you're the one who can be sued, because you agreed to the windows 10 EULA.

It's not Microsoft's fault. I'm not a lawyer, but I'm pretty sure that you, the user, are the one who can be found negligent in a court of law should Microsoft seize one of your clients' confidential data and share it with one of their trusted partners or law enforcement in a way that harms your client. That's because by simply using Windows 10, you agreed that Microsoft was allowed to spy on you, and through you, your client.

If this scares you, it should. I'm absolutely terrified, and I'm one of the few people who knows how to dig into the registry and at least partially excise the pre-installed spyware.

I hope business will take a look at Windows 10 and start screaming bloody murder. That might make Microsoft wake the hell up. If you work for Apple, now is the time to steal all of Microsoft's business clientele by promising to protect their trade secrets and customers' data. That might also make Microsoft backpedal.

Til then, I'm jumping ship for Linux, and I suggest that you come with me. There are some easy ways to install that OS, (Ubuntu, Debian, and Linux Mint come to mind) and with WINE, you can run almost all of your windows applications on Linux anyway.

If this is how Microsoft handles privacy, I'm not going to stick around and get spied on.

The Microsoft Privacy Statement is a 35 printable page, document, excerpted here.

Windows 10 ("Windows") is a personalized computing environment that enables you to seamlessly roam and access services, preferences, and content across your computing devices from phones to tablets to the Surface Hub. Rather than residing as a static software program on your device, key components of Windows are cloud-based, and both cloud and local elements of Windows are updated regularly, providing you with the latest improvements and features. In order to provide this computing experience, we collect data about you, your device, and the way you use Windows. And because Windows is personal to you, we give you choices about the personal data we collect and how we use it. For more information about data collection and privacy in Windows, go to microsoft.com.

Of course, "the Cloud" is simply a harmless seeming euphemism for data collection and mining[65] within Microsoft's data -center server-farms, Lefty already knew.

Back in the Insider forum, many additional messages were being posted.

Many new problems with Windows 10

Nagesh Pandey asked on August 6

After I upgraded my HP-dv7 from Windows 7 Home Premium to Windows 10 problems that I face after upgrade are

1) It takes lot of time to start.

2) It hangs a lot.

3) Many of my pre-installed applications from HP are blocked.

4) Amazingly I can't even scan a document properly…

5) It even slows down my net speed..

Please help me out...

"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter, don't mind." - Dr. Seuss

Windows 10 doesn't install

Eduardo PP Ramos asked on August 6

Both my tablet (which is a MS Surface!) and my notebook (and also my PC at my office) don't get the Windows 10 installed. Windows Update tries to do it twice a day, and fails. This has happened ten times with my notebook, and nine times with my Surface since this weekend. What's happening, MS?

"We've all heard that a million monkeys banging on a million typewriters will eventually reproduce the entire works of Shakespeare. Now, thanks to the Internet, we know that this is not true." Heard on the Internet

Then there were some positive notes from the media.

On July 29th, Microsoft rolled out Windows 10 to the world. In just four days, Windows 10 was installed on roughly 18 million devices. Now, a new report suggests that Windows 10 has been installed on over 25 million devices, over one week after the release of the operating system. The unconfirmed report comes from Neowin, claiming Windows 10 installs have "surpassed 25 million and may be as high as 27 million".

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[65] *Data mining is the computing process of discovering patterns in large data sets. Businesses use data mining to acquire new customers, cross sell to existing customers, and profile customers with more accuracy.*

> *If true, this is obviously a great figure for the software giant and shows that giving away an operating system for free is definitely worthwhile for the company. We'll have more on this story once we confirm these numbers with our own sources.*

To the critics however the *so-called* Start Menu bore little resemblance in appearance or more importantly functionality, that the menu had held starting with Windows 95. This now having been replaced with a reduced size and less functional Windows 8 Start Screen, only now suspiciously renamed.[66] This menu would come to be known in the forums, as the Franken-Menu. User customization by the user to improve its functionality or appearance was no longer allowed.

The Cortana assistant had limited functionality, frequently did not work correctly if at all, and aimed itself at a niche home user or hobbyist market. This was an actual deficit and distraction for the business and corporate worlds. The tablet and desktop modes provided by Continuum[67], attempted to serve both worlds, but ended up not serving either sufficiently.

The Windows Store contained low quality Apps, primarily games and utilities; many deemed primitive, slow, and filled with advertising. They also required the developer to provide Microsoft a thirty percent cut or (vig[68]) off the top.

Update and changes would be installed whether you wanted them or not, and whether or not they messed up your computer and software applications. A local media report said:

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[66] *Renaming is now common in corporate America, especially after some bad press. Take a cable TV/Internet company like Charter or Time Warner with horrible customer service ratings merge them together and give this entity a new name like Spectrum. Take a poor selling car and give it a former bestselling name like Compass now Cherokee, or Five Hundred now Taurus.*

[67] *Continuum is a system which allows the connecting of a phone to a monitor and to a mouse and keyboard to make your phone seem to work like a laptop.*

[68] *Vigorous, or simply the vig, also known as juice, the cut or the take, is the amount charged by a bookmaker, or bookie, for taking a bet from a gambler. In the US, it also means the interest on a loan shark's loan.*

"As Windows 7 and 8 users continue to upgrade their devices to Windows 10, Microsoft edges closer and closer to its 1 billion users goal which it has stated that it wants to hit in the next three years."
"At this point, there is precious little evidence that Windows 7 and 8 users will sacrifice their current installation keys in exchange for a "free" Windows 10. This brings some confusion to the word Free, as if somehow sacrificing your current paid license comes without cost."

A week had passed now and messages in the forum outlined the continuing problems that users encountered. Microsoft acknowledged problems with the activation servers, which prevented many from running the software after installation or reinstallation, but did not provide a fix. This massive uptick of activation security, used to prevent software piracy, bit them back.

Forum posts continued to report; no sound, blue screens, exception error messages, display problems, slow boot, startup and shutdown problems, problems in Cortana, the Store, and more installation problems.

Then more news articles showed up.

Windows 10 is not really free: you are paying for it with your privacy
August 3
It might look free, but you pay for it in other ways.
Windows 10, it seems, is proving a hit with both the public and the technology press after its release last week. After two days, it had been installed on 67 million PCs. Of course, sceptics may argue that this may have simply been a reflection of how much people disliked Windows 8 and the fact that the upgrade was free.
For others, though, it is the very fact that the upgrade is free that has them concerned that Microsoft has adopted a new, "freemium" model for making money from its operating system.

How to secure Windows 10: The paranoid's guide
Worried sick over Windows 10's privacy settings? There's a lot you can do to lock them down, but you will lose some functionality along the way.

Steven J. Vaughan-Nichols for Between the Lines August 5-- Topic: Security

Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean that they're not out to get you.

Locking down Windows 10

Still don't trust these new "features?" I can't blame you. This is not the Windows you've known and used for years. This is a Windows that exists both on your PC and in Microsoft's cloud. Here's how to lock down Windows 10 and make it more of a PC-centric operating system.

First, head to Settings/Privacy. There you will find no fewer than 13—count'em, 13--different privacy settings screens. The major settings are under the 'General' screen. The other screens are concerned with which apps can and can't access your calendar, camera, messages, microphone and so on.

Still not private enough for you? Then don't use Windows 10, Chrome OS, iOS, Android, or any other system that's tied closely into the cloud. Instead, use Linux as your desktop operating system. By default, Linux is the only mainstream operating system that still relies primarily on true desktop apps.

Not ready for such a radical move? Well, actually, it's not that radical. If you can use Windows, trust me, you can use Linux distributions such as Ubuntu 15.04 or Mint 17.2.

Otherwise, get busy locking down Windows 10. Good luck.

Windows 10: A SYSADMIN speaks his brains – and says MEH

Average Joe will be happy with it. So long as he hasn't used Windows 7

29 Jul, Trevor Pott

For all my griping, Windows 10 is kinda not bad. My wife compares it to Canadian politicians. Everyone on offer is at least a little bit crap, but there's usually one that meets "good enough" standards and probably will do as much good as they do harm. I think it's an accurate comparison for Windows 10.

Most people don't want their computers to radically change. They prefer slow, incremental evolution. They like stability. Business especially prefers this. For the most part, that's Windows 10. It's really not that much different than its predecessors, and that will make it usable by most.

But usable isn't enjoyable. When Win7 came out there were a few complaints (give me back my up arrow, damn it!) but

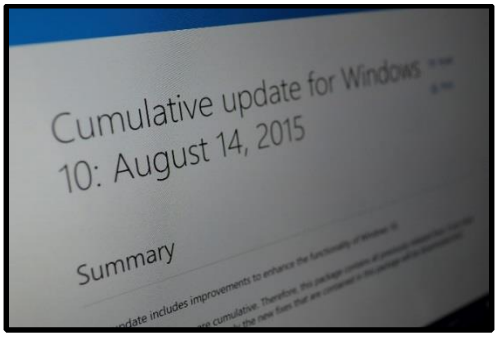
for the most part there was relief. At long last, here was salvation from Vista and a path forward from XP.
There's none of that with Windows 10. It's good enough to use if you have to. It's definitely a step up from Windows 8. But if you have Windows 7 there's no sane reason to move to Windows 10 as, ultimately, Windows 7 is still better.
If you don't use VPNs except to very new servers, you trust Microsoft enough to let them force updates on you, you're okay with this digital creepy doll shouting everything you do back to the mothership, then Windows 10 is good enough.
Windows 10: it's only a little bit crap, and really, that's better than we could have hoped for after Windows 8.

Windows 10 upgrade reportedly being automatically downloaded onto unsuspecting PCs
WinBeta August 14
According to a report from the Inquirer, Microsoft has confirmed that it automatically downloads Windows 10 into upgrade-eligible Windows PCs, regardless of if users opted-in to the free upgrade. Reports from such users indicate that upgrade files, ranging from 3.5 to 6GB in disk space, were downloaded and stored in the rather secluded ~BT folder, wasting both disk space and valuable, metered bandwidth. According to some of the victims, this unprovoked behavior caused their monthly bandwidth allowances[69] *to cap.*

When the Inquirer inquired about the bizarre phenomenon, Microsoft confirmed:
"For individuals who have chosen to receive automatic updates through Windows Update, we help upgradable devices get ready for Windows 10 by downloading the files they'll need if they decide to upgrade. When the upgrade is ready, the customer will be prompted to install Windows 10 on the device."
This download allegedly comes batched with the routine Patch Tuesday update, so don't be shocked to see an unusually enormous update.
If true, many will find this aggressive behavior quite disconcerting, especially on the heels of other recent invasive Windows 10 measures such as its option of using your computer and bandwidth as a seeding server for other

69 Broadband Internet services sell plans based on speed, limiting bandwidth according to each plan. Plans with higher limits are more expensive, but faster.

Windows 10 users to download updates from being enabled by default, or the inability to turn off updates in the consumer-facing versions of Windows 10.
The prime issue here isn't necessarily what they did, or what they're planning, but the lack of transparency. None of these actions were what you'd call "marketing points", and the discoveries of these features were not announced directly by Microsoft itself in advance, but by keen users.



We know what is best for you, says Microsoft

Despite the inevitable kneejerk reaction to Microsoft's plots, there is some merit to its behavior. Refusing Windows updates, which casual users are prone to do, leaves the system perpetually vulnerable to malicious attacks. Windows 10 is currently free to upgrade, and should unsuspecting users eventually decide to update, having them wait hours for the upgrade files to finish could sour the upgrade experience.
Still, it really begs the question: just what else is Microsoft doing with our computers behind the scenes? And at what point will they have gone too far? Or has the company crossed that line already?

Then a few of the original unbanned Insiders bailed.

Win10=FAIL, …I'm Outta Here
well that was your chance Microsoft, and you blew it bigtime! despite your continued denial of the truth windows 8x was in fact a MASSIVE fail and we all waited patiently for you to redeem yourself with windows 10, hell we even volunteered our valuable time testing the POS and tried to help you, WE ALL tried to help you, but that didn't matter, you were gonna

do what you were gonna do anyway, even if that meant your own continued failure as a company...

I've had enough, I've been back to win7 for a while now, and im happy testing is over, the final product is still not good, and im not interested in wasting my breath anymore, nor do i have any continued reason for posting here im outta here (again) and once again after deleting my profile on here, all my posts will be labeled as coming from A.User, just like all those who have walked away before me.

we fought a good fight, for the benefit of user choice and freedom, and it's just time to move on now there is no future in windows for me and my time is better served with Linux systems and helping people migrate to them in a post Microsoft world. I will miss many of you insiders ;)

as for the 10 fans, all your data belongs to Microsoft

BarcodeZero

"I do not fear computers. I fear lack of them." Isaac Asimov

Dozrguy replied on August 11

Sure hate to see you go!

it's pretty understandable though, as the TP, Win10, and these forums have become pretty lackluster and bland!

Win10—nothin new to see here, folks. Please be moving along now.

Yet another cumulative update for Windows 10 (KB3081438) rolls out

Microsoft has rolled out yet another cumulative update for Windows 10. No change log has been made available yet, but these cumulative updates typically include improvements to improve the functionality of Windows 10 and resolve vulnerabilities in the operating system.

This update is available through Windows Update and will be downloaded and installed automatically. Let the whole community know in the comments below if you notice any new improvements. We'll publish the change log as soon as it becomes available here.

There are now over 50 million people using Windows 10 worldwide

Zac Bowden Aug 14th

I promised recently that I'd keep a close eye on Windows 10 install numbers over the next few weeks, as it's something

many people are interested in and to many a deciding factor on whether Windows 10 is doing well or not. So according to my contacts, Windows 10 is now installed on over 50 million devices worldwide.
50 million is an impressive number indeed, especially when you consider the install count was around half of that just 7 days ago. My sources say Microsoft began pushing Windows 10 out to a whole lot more devices this week, as their method of upgrading in waves is still ongoing. The Redmond giant has slowly been adding more and more compatible devices to its upgrade waves, so expect this number to continue rising over the coming months.
Microsoft is currently working on its first non-patch style update for Windows 10, codenamed Threshold 2 and set for arrival in October this year. The update will include a new universal Messaging app, extensions for Edge (plus other Edge improvements) and updates to the Universal App Platform. With over 50 million users running Windows 10, Microsoft desperately needs to tend to some of Windows 10's biggest fallbacks, and with Threshold 2, the company will begin that process.

The media continued reporting stories with a similar theme.

Windows 10 Doesn't Stop Spying on You, Even After Disabling It's Creepy Features
Thursday, August 13 Swati Khandelwal
In our previous articles, we raised concern about Windows 10 privacy issues, including its controversial Wi-Fi Sense feature. Also, to cope up with these issues, I provided you a one-click solution to fix all privacy compromising features that allow Microsoft to track users.
But unfortunately, all those efforts got wasted because Microsoft still tracks you, even after you harden your Windows 10 privacy to an extreme level by disabling all privacy-infringing settings.
This time the culprits are – Cortana and Bing search.
Windows 10 features, including Cortana and Bing search, continue communicating with Microsoft's servers and sending it data, even after you turned the features off.
A Technical Analysis done by Ars showed that even when you tell Microsoft to not to make any Internet-related inquiries by changing various privacy settings, it appears that Windows 10 still communicate with the software giant's servers for different information.

Cortana is Cheating on You

With Cortana and searching the Web from the Start menu turned off, a request to bing.com is still made for a file called threshold.appcache that contains some Cortana information, whenever a user opens Start and starts typing.

The operating system's voice assistant Cortana sends information containing user's identifying computer ID that persists across reboots. This allows Microsoft to distinguish between the Cortana requests from different computers.

The worrisome part is that Cortana sends this data even though she is disabled.

Windows 10 Sends your Data via Unencrypted Channel

It also appears that Microsoft is sending data to its servers via its Live Tiles in the Start menu. Even if users clear all the Tiles, Windows 10 re-installs new tile info from Microsoft.

Windows 10 does so using unencrypted HTTP connections, potentially leaving users open to malicious actors who could intercept the traffic between users and the company, which is more troublesome.

In response Microsoft said that all communications between a Windows 10 machine and Microsoft are only to make the retrieval of updates easier.

"As part of delivering Windows 10 as a service, updates may be offered to provide ongoing new features to Bing searches, such as new visual layouts, styles and search code," Microsoft said.

Microsoft further added that "no query or search usage data" is sent to the company, in accordance with the user's selected privacy settings, and the same applied to searching offline for apps, files and settings on the device.

From the comments section displayed directly below the article:

The setting, a Microsoft boardroom late one night.

"But sir, how are we going to get the public to blindly install your US government mass surveillance dragnet OS software?"

A man in the cheap black suit slides a brown sealed folder across the desk.

The Microsoft employee opens and reads.

"We get people to call it a "her," give it a female voice and tell people they have options to pseudo-disable the really creepy stuff - but no not really. "Nice"!

"Just because you're paranoid, doesn't mean they aren't out to get you."
Seen on the Internet

Back in the Insider forum, the hits kept coming.

Goodbye I'm done. Thanks for the great debates, conversations, and flame wars

rebusgadfly started on August 19

Greetings....

I have been with windows since dos and when floppy disks were cool. Anyone remember 56k modems?

*I have been testing win10 since march. I am so feed up with Microsoft and windows 10 that I am leaving the insiders program and I have set up a dual boot with Ubuntu Linux running as my main OS, win10 is just there when I have to help my kids and family members fix the bull **** that win10 creates. So long friends and thank you for some great conversations and debates. To my fellow old timers I'm with you, metro apps are **** and the removal of desktop environmental choices is the final straw. The flat look doesn't hold a candle to aero. Why in hell would I want a phone op system on my $1500 laptop?*

"Don't worry about people stealing your ideas. If your ideas are any good, you'll have to ram them down people's throats." -Howard Hathaway Aiken

Still the Insider forum messages kept coming.

W10 and its horrible interface.

ThomasH_started on August 19

Of course, taste is in the eyes of the beholder, but we know that the screaming color tiles of W8 flunked, and ever since Apple has scored a humongous raise in market share. For professionals, busy with solving problems, a level of familiarity is a must. So is ergonomics and respect to cognitive abilities of our brains. Me personally? I was happy with XP and W7, I simply always used the "classic windows theme." That's right, the same which we know since w3.1 or so...I even set the blue gradient from deep blue to elevate the white window title, to the brighter blue on the right. Wait, it's gone now!

W10 upgrade made the task bar pitch black(!!!), selected windows are deep-dark-gray with slightly darker gray text, barely visible. Active windows are all looking like inactive ones, except that the gray letter on them are even so slightly different, all bars are gray as well. Really??

I have to lean toward the screen to figure out which window is active. Who made this ridiculous call??? Windows bars are ugly, ultra-big, making a childish impression, primitive almost. As if W10 would be a 1st ui program of an apprentice without any scientific knowledge of human perception.

Sure the adaptation for causal user on a touch screen tablet is needed, thus fingertip sized controls and mimics in tablet mode. However, people who use large surface screens, keyboards, and actually WORK in the business, need to have back the customary level of freedom is setting up their work environment. Would you drive a car without a customary pedals and steering wheel? We need customary things on customary places.

We cannot abandon and invalidate decades of evolution in UI, based on feedback from users, scientific research, and genuine innovation. I am afraid, I cannot work on this horrible interface. For now I will hit the "reverse to W7" button, later on, if Microsoft will stay stubborn, I will transition to Apple, as many others did. In photography for example, it's difficult to find anyone still using Windows. MS: It's a warning shot to you, as are the billion Android users on tablets and phones. Foremost the youngsters. If Android will provide an 'app' for edit/compile, work with keyboard etc., you are in danger to become marginalized by upcoming generations of youngsters knowing Android in and out, and keeping working with it.

At my company, we have the campus wide license for Windows, and our strategists move carefully from version to version. From XP we moved to W7, Vista was deemed not suitable for professional work. Now for the 1st time I hear a buzz of abandoning Microsoft totally, and adapting Apples' IOS. We cannot use W10 for work. Not even with Winaero tweaker, thanks god for this little gem.

I recommend to MS abandon dogma and "meeting decisions", respect your users and your own established tradition.

Not happy with Windows 10 at all - wondering where Microsoft has gone wrong?

"Today's mighty oak, is yesterday's nut that held its ground." Anonymous

Airspeed started on August 19

I've been a strong supporter of Microsoft, having started with DOS 2.11, and for a decade been a software engineer dedicated to Microsoft's development products.

I was smart enough to avoid the Vista debacle, and went from XP to Windows 7. I have a ton of machines, all legally licensed, and have mostly gone with 64 bit pro. I have to say I was really, really happy with Windows 7.

I put 8.1 on one machine, and hated it from day one. I was thinking of reverting back to 7, but decided to wait for the full rollout of Windows 10, especially because it was being hyped as being the best operating system of Microsoft ever, having learned from previous mistakes.

I did something very unwise - I put Windows 10 on my traveling laptop, and then went off on vacation, trusting it would work fine. WRONG!

I hate this so much now that I think I will go back to Windows 7, and not try until it has been out for a year.

Here are my gripes:

•Privacy issues - oh boy, am I now getting interested in Ubuntu. I thought I would never say those words...

•Quality of the build - it is not good. Here is what is happening: fuzzy fonts (won't fix), unpredictable mouse behavior (makes me do cold reboots), unpredictable lock-ups. It is simply unacceptable quality

•Interface - I think it stinks. Sorry. Very bluntly put. I had to get an external package to make to windows button work in a way that is practical for me.

•The forced updates: Please, let the user remain in control of the machine. This alone is cause to revert to 7.

This is a very rough listing, I could go into more detail. But I am really, really disappointed in Microsoft at this point, yet I am so dependent. If there were a way I could drop Office completely and move away from Microsoft as an operating system, while still keeping the open PC architecture, I would.

There are several things Microsoft could learn from this. Here are what I would recommend:

1. Privacy is now becoming a real issue. Don't force the cloud, and don't rely so much on Microsoft user accounts.

2. Let the user stay in control! I can't emphasize this enough.

3. Look at the quality of what you are pushing out. Take more time to get it right.

4. I'd rather pay $100+ for an operating system that works, per machine, than install a free junkopsys, which is what Windows 10 is revealing to be to me. Believe me - I pay for my licenses. And I don't want junkware.

As soon as I return, I am going back to Windows 7. After all, I have the disks, and I paid for it...

If Mark Twain were still alive, he would have said something to the effect that first God made idiots, but that was just for practice. Then he went about making Microsoft executives.

Dozrguy replied on August 19

1:this is the result of a "skewed vision" that a pc , a tablet, a phone, and an Xbox are all one and the same:

the need to depreciate the OS down to the lowest common denominator to work on THE CELLPHONE!

2: consumer, ad-driven world

3: you get what you pay for in this world and win10 is FREE so it can appeal to the FREE SOCIETY. MS don't need to cater to the customer anymore since its FREE and they will now cater to their own needs and what they think the consumer needs

"Trust yourself. Think for yourself. Act for yourself. Speak for yourself. Be yourself. Imitation is suicide." -Marva Collins

Rick-M replied on August 19

Many of us have been saying exactly the same thing for the last 10 months now since the start of the Windows 10 test program. We were sold on the idea that we would be getting a genuine desktop operating system back in our possession. What we got instead was a highly modified, stripped down, traditional Windows OS built on a phone interface that just happens to be compatible with the desktop. The Universal OS concept may have it merits, but he idea is not new and has been tried before without too much success. Windows 10 in its present form, appears to be head in that same direction.

"If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up some place else"-Yogi Berra

Windows 10 continued making news.

Windows 10 market share growth slows to just ten per cent

There's good news and bad news for Microsoft because Windows 8.1 is slipping fast

24 Aug Simon Sharwood

Windows 10 now has 5.95 per cent of the desktop operating systems market, according to the folks at StatCounter.

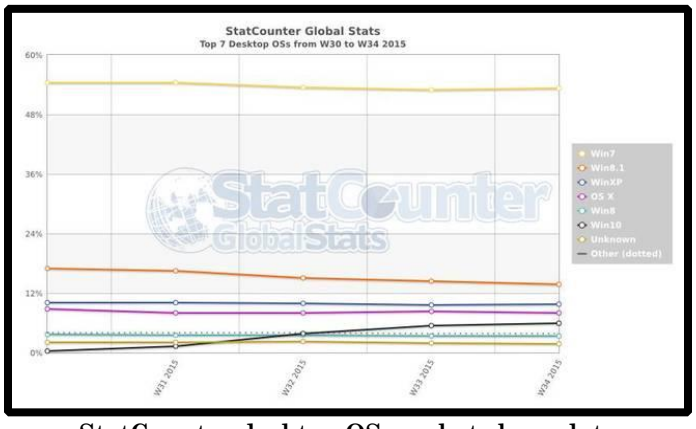
There's good news and bad news in that result,.

The good is that StatCounter has revised its figure for Windows 10 market share in the week of August 10 to 16. Last week, the outfit said Redmond's latest had won 4.95 per cent of the market. It's now adjusted that number to 5.39 per cent, meaning that in Windows 10's second full week on the market it added 42.59 per cent market share.

The bad news is that for the week August 16 to 23, StatCounter has Windows 10 at 5.95 per cent. Or just 10.39 per cent growth over the previous week.

Windows 8.1 took the hit: its share went from 14.39 per cent to 13.84 per cent. Windows 7 grew a little, from 52.91 per cent to 53.3 per cent.

Results like that give us a decent reason to take StatCounter's data with a pinch of salt, because while the outfit has tracking codes embedded in some three million websites and that's a lovely big sample, it does produce some odd wobbles and jumps.



StatCounter desktop OS market share data

While Windows 10's growth looks to have slowed, winning nearly six per cent of a global market in a month is quite a feat. Microsoft's problem, however, is that PCs are no longer

the main game. When Redmond controlled 90 per cent or more of the desktop market it controlled 90 per cent of just about all connected computing devices. These days there are billions of smartphones out there, most running Android or iOS. StatCounter says Windows phone has 2.17 per cent market share. The forthcoming launch of Windows 10 for mobile devices, which Redmond hopes will go well once the OS runs Android apps, will offer another measure of whether the new operating system is a success.

Windows 10 banned by torrent trackers due to privacy concerns

Paranoia runs deep, really, really deep

Ron / Aug 23

Torrent trackers have apparently banned the sharing of Windows 10 due to "privacy concerns" based on reports that surfaced on the internet a few weeks ago. Windows 10 has been in the limelight about privacy concerns since it was released, with reports claiming that Microsoft can wipe torrents and pirated software from people's hard drives — a piracy kill switch.

A torrent tracker, for those that did not know, is a server that communicates between peers using the BitTorrent protocol. Torrents are typically used to share files — sometimes (or maybe most of the time) illegal files too. The tracker server keeps track of where these shared files reside on peer machines, which ones are available at time of request, and helps coordinate the sharing of that file.

The controversy regarding Windows 10 and privacy originates from Microsoft's Services Agreement, which was recently updated to allow the company to download software updates and configuration changes that may prevent people from playing counterfeit games. The agreement does not go into specifics — which is likely why this paranoia came to be. The agreement does not even explicitly include Windows 10, rather it includes your Microsoft Account, Xbox Live, and Windows Store content.

"Sometimes you'll need software updates to keep using the Services. We may automatically check your version of the software and download software updates or configuration changes, including those that prevent you from accessing the Services, playing counterfeit games, or using unauthorized hardware peripheral devices," the Services Agreement states.

Microsoft's Services Agreement refers primarily to protection against counterfeiting of Xbox Live and Windows Store content, not content on Windows 10 specifically. There is no evidence that any privacy related information is in fact being shared by Win 10.

But the privacy paranoia has been taken to heart with some torrent trackers, having removed Windows 10 altogether. Torrent groups BB and FSC are considering the removal of the operating system from their trackers, while other groups have already done so. A torrent group by the name of iTS explains that Windows 10 is now "off-limits" because of the amount of data it allegedly shares.

"Many of you might have heard or read about the terrible privacy policy of windows 10 recently. Unfortunately Microsoft decided to revoke any kind of data protection and submit whatever they can gather to not only themselves but also others. One of those is one of the largest anti-piracy company called MarkMonitor. Amongst other things windows 10 sends the contents of your local disks directly to one of their servers. Obviously this goes way too far and is a serious threat to sites like ours and we had to take measures," iTS argues.

"Since last Thursday Windows 10 is officially banned from iTS. Perhaps at some point special versions of windows 10 will surface that would successfully wipe all those outrageous privacy violations but until then windows 10 is not welcome here in the interest of this site and all iTS members," iTS adds.

Torrent group BB claims to have seen it firsthand that Windows 10 is gathering information and sharing with anti-piracy groups. This is what they had to say: "We have also found [Windows 10] will be gathering information on users' P2P use to be shared with anti-piracy group… what's particularly nasty is that apparently it sends the results of local(!!) searches to a well-known anti-piracy company directly so as soon as you have one known p2p or scene release on your local disk … BAM!"

"there is no evidence that any privacy related information is being shared by Windows 10"

Another group, FSC, is banning anyone who visits their site while running Windows 10. "As we all know, Microsoft recently released Windows 10. You as a member should know, that we as a site are thinking about banning the OS from FSC. That would mean you cannot use the site with the OS installed."

MarkMonitor, for those that did not know, is a leader in online corporate identity protection. MarkMonitor has worked with Microsoft for the past several years to help combat online identity theft. MarkMonitor basically delivers information about confirmed phishing attacks against its customers directly to Microsoft for use by the company's Phishing Filter and SmartScreen technology — ultimately protecting those who use Microsoft services.

"Microsoft is committed to increasing consumer confidence in safely using the Internet for commerce and communications. As part of this effort, we're working with MarkMonitor, a proven anti-phishing technology provider, to help protect our customers," said John Scarrow, general manager, Anti-Spam and Anti-Phishing Team, Microsoft Technology Care and Safety Group. "MarkMonitor is a recognized leader in monitoring and detecting phishing and other online identity fraud, and this ***relationship*** *allows us to learn from MarkMonitor's valuable fraud data and thereby help enhance the protection our technologies can provide for our customers," Scarrow adds.*

There is no evidence that any privacy related information is being shared by Windows 10. If you are concerned about privacy on Windows 10, you can head over to winbeta to see how you can adjust a few settings to ease your mind.

There are many kinds of relationships thought Lefty, remembering his history. One could say that there is also a relationship between the space shuttle and a horse's ass.

The railroad tracks, built by immigrated Europeans and others, were needed to transport the Space Shuttle's booster rockets from design and manufacturing in Houston, to the launch site at Cape Canaveral, Florida.
The shuttle booster rocket design width was based on what would fit on that standard rail car.
The width of the rail car was based on width of the regular gauge railroad tracks.
The American railroad tracks were based on the width of the railroad tracks back home in Europe.
The widths of the railroad tracks in Europe were based on the width of the European roads.
The Europeans road width was based on the wheel ruts made by Roman Empire chariots in the foot trails.
The Roman chariot wheel spacing design was based on the width of a horse's ass.

Lefty thought that users who wanted their computers to talk to all these other computers would allow this. Nevertheless, do not force it on them, and especially do not do this to the unsuspecting.

He tried to log into the forum in the evening and discovered some messages from MS.

Lefty
Your profile has been blocked.
Drew1905
Your profile has been blocked.

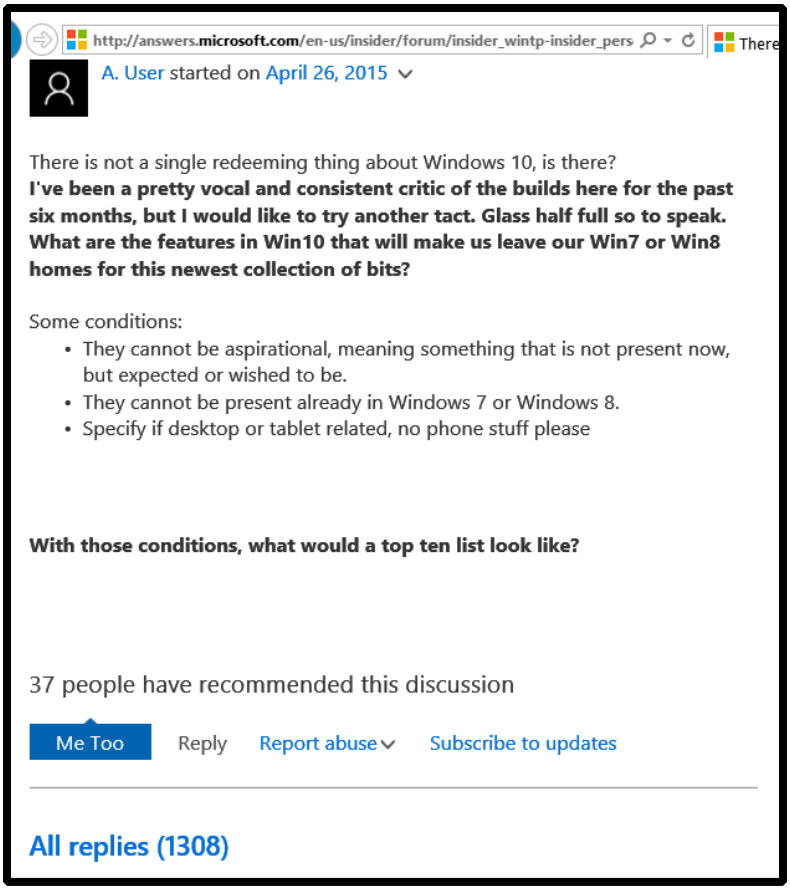
Lefty had now been banned three times, under three different profiles. Lemmings are not paranoid enough, he thought. The mods deleted five pages of his posts, which probably included the newest story. Apparently he was having too much fun, Lefty mused.

As self-proclaimed computer geek, he was able to generate an infinite number of email addresses from his network domain. He would create profiles ranging from Drew1906 to Drew1999 if need be.

Reentering the forum now as Drew1906, he received a message.

Hello Drew1906,
A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from GoNonpro.
Title: There is not a single redeeming thing about Windows 10, is there?
Reply
Welcome Drew1906,
I feel as if I have met ***half*** *your entire family.****: D***
The OP[70]***, A.User,*** *was a wise ol' cuss wasn't he ?*
As result, we have this topic:

[70] *OP is shorthand for being the Original Poster of a message to a forum thread.*



Lefty continued entertaining the group using humorous, educational, and sometimes insightful, fiction to stave off the depressing reality of Windows 10, and the Sturm and Drang[71] involved. He then posted yet another chapter of his continuing stories under his latest and greatest profile name.

[71] *Sturm und Drang is translated from German as 'storm and stress'. It was a movement in German literature and music in which individual subjectivity and extremes of emotion were given free expression. This was in reaction to the perceived constraints of rationalism imposed by the Enlightenment.*

Insider Story 1001

We piled out of my van at the ranch to a rousing reception from Willie and his road crew. They treated Colakid like a long lost relative telling stories and swapping lies around the campfire. Willie was a gracious host providing plentiful liquid and flammable refreshments. He and his band later treated us to a mini concert, followed with a good old-fashioned Texas style pig roast and some Texas beer. He sang rowdy versions of his songs on his famous old Martin guitar he named Trigger, like Hard to Be an Outlaw, and Bring it On. Their set concluded with them belting out a bawdy version of the Highwaymen with the roadies, Colakid, and his uncle Bill singing the raunchy parts. He finished the set with a melancholy rendition of Hands on the Wheel and afterwards they rolled a few *fatties* and sat around the campfire, listening to Willie's many stories of his travels.

After the overnight stay in Willie's guesthouse, and a good meal behind them as well as some rest, they took off with the Harley and sidecar now trailered behind the bus. We thanked Willie and his mates profusely for their hospitality and for the use of the bus. He indicated he wouldn't be using it for a while because "You can't make a record, if you ain't got nothing to say." We offered that he was welcome to come along, but Willie thought desert camping was in his past now and these days he preferred more comfortable surroundings. Besides, "I mostly travel in my pickup truck[72] these days."

Entering the bus, I thought the smell resembled burnt hemp, but it was comfortable.

[72] *"Just because you were conceived in a pickup truck, doesn't mean you have to die in one." An old West Texas proverb*

Willie's bus

It was a typical 100-degree August Texas day, but luckily, the air-conditioning worked reasonably well, and the air recirculation for some reason proved to be excellent.

We were sure that we would be forgiven for bringing such an energy inefficient vehicle to Burning Man. We were however in general alignment with Burning Man's ten principals, while also trying our best to write a new open source OS.

We all thought Burning Man would be a great place for usability testing making use of the hippie and San Francisco free spirit types who attend this event. The origin and roots of the personal computer came out of Silicon Valley, after all. The burners would not be heavy computer users for the most part, but rather a mix of older and younger, male and female. They would be good test subjects for the 3D interface and the general operations of the RealOS.

Preferreduser and I did most of the driving; Michigan Mary offered to help serve up snacks and drinks, acting as informal hostess. The other members continued coordinating with headquarters back in Canada and continued their work to find and fix coding bugs within the RealOS. They recently found and exterminated one such bug. The Paint editor falsely provided a tile size where horizontal and vertical dimensions were inadvertently inverted.

I played a Fleetwood Mac mix disc as background for the trip, and like a band of gypsies, we went down the highway. The whole group grooved to the quality of the harmonies, melodies, and the musical tightness of this great group. Remembering that "Mac" created this musical excellence in the midst of the group's turbulent interpersonal and career drama. Our group could unquestionably relate.

Michigan Mary was working on a number of computer code debug tasks, but also displayed a great eye for color and worked on the color themes, translucency, and icon designs for RealOS. Having dual major degrees in CIS and Graphic Arts, she also held a recent background working as a freelance graphic designer when she met Dozrguy at Sturgis, and now the Granite team made use of those skills. Prior to that, as IT administrator for a large company, she had been close to changing their sixty-computer network over to Mac computers, but still held faith that Microsoft was the better choice. That changed right at the beginning of the Windows 10 disaster.

Heading down the highway towards the Alamo, which seemed apropos, I spoke with her about that experience. "Microsoft wants their new Windows program to look and act as a cell phone, but that is not

what we needed for our business. Our people carried company cell phones but no one used them for work on the network. They use them only as a phone, and send texts. We needed a clean operating system that ran our software programs without glitches, gizmos, gimmicks, or gadgets. We certainly didn't need a system that spied on us."

So MS became tone deaf to your business needs, I asked? "We used the operating system to access the programs we used to run our business. That's all. The extra stuff is clutter to us. Enhancements to MS Office are appreciated, because we used the Office programs a great deal. The operating system only needed to run clean without any glitches. I spent a lot of years supporting Microsoft and hoped they would continue to produce great products for us and for the rest of the world."

What other factors existed in creating this disaster, I probed noticing the normally reserved Mary seemed to be on a roll now. She continued, "I saw that shutting off automatic updates was not allowed but could only be deferred, and this became a real issue for us. We ran programs that would not always work correctly due to the updates installed. I tried to leave the automatic updates active when possible, but now and then Microsoft releases an update that blocks or disables our ERP[73] system. At those times, I shut off automatic updates until I could verify the problem was resolvable. Otherwise I would have sixty computer systems that won't work and employees that can't function."

Your long-term plan was what then, I probed. "It became obvious I needed to find an alternative computer operating system for our company. We decided to continue using Windows 7 as long as technical support was offered, but in the meantime have a fresh look at Macintosh and Linux systems. We used several Mac computers that were added over the years and they acted more reliably than our PC systems. I needed our workers to concentrate on production and not playing around with apps, or a

[73] *Enterprise resource planning or ERP is the integrated management of core business processes, using software and technology.*

software store. I did not use *cloud-based* anything and I didn't want to work with a company that would force use of their cloud down somebody's throat whether its wanted or not. Our data would remain within our care; reside on our servers not in the care of another company. When and if, I decided to utilize the cloud, this decision would come about because I felt this to best for our company and not because I was forced. I did not want OneDrive and I definitely did not want or need this built into my operating system."

I continued, looking back at all of this now after some time, what are your feelings? "I have no doubt that Microsoft planned this upgrade having the intention of getting rid of the older versions of Windows. Their goal was to force older systems into an upgrade, or out of use. The Apple computer systems have improved due to integrating the new Intel CPU chips. Their systems don't keep copies of files from websites you visit, and they remain fast rather than slowing down over time. This alone is a major improvement over the MS methods. Their user interface is exceptionably user friendly, and you can now find most of the software written for the PC is also available for the Mac. Virus or malware issues rarely hit the Mac. One big problem was the price tag, but that has dropped over the past couple years. If MS continues pushing its customers into things they don't want, then customers will shift rapidly to the Mac and other systems as an alternative to feeling controlled by MS. Many people I know have already moved to Linux, because the operating system is free of initial cost and their user interface similar to the previous Microsoft Classic desktop. Microsoft may push people over the edge and find they lost their market share to other systems. They need to listen to the voices of their users instead of trying to *bully* them into products that don't work for them."

She continued, "finally I decided to drop out of that particular rat race and strike out on my own to do something more rewarding", she continued. "When I met Dozrguy at Sturgis and he told me about your project, I thought that maybe I could make a contribution to something larger, and that was something I desperately needed and here I am."

A few hours later, we rolled into the Alamo at 300 Alamo Plaza, in San Antonio.

The Alamo

Touring this facility, we learned that Mexican Army General Santa Anna's 1836 attack against the Alamo became the logical culmination of a two-week long siege. The standoff ended in a bloody ninety-minute battle, costing the lives of nearly two hundred men. These included one Crockett, David (Davy), age 49, a Colonel from Tennessee, and one Bowie, James (Jim), age 40, a Colonel from Kentucky.

The importance of this stop to the group was that, while facts surrounding the siege of the Alamo are still debated, there is no doubt about what the battle has come to symbolize. People worldwide continue to remember the Alamo as a heroic struggle against impossible odds — a place where brave men made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom.

The simple Eighteenth Century statement that, "All Men are Created Equal, are Endowed by Their Creator With Certain Unalienable Rights, among These Being Life, Liberty and The Pursuit of Happiness", then threatened the existing established order. No longer, being the subjects of another, but now citizens with rights. No man, no government, nor corporation, could claim privilege. This fact ensured conflict among the

rising masses at this particular time in our history, and again in current times.

While not facing certain death, the RealOS group was facing a struggle themselves to return the free use of the personal computer back to the user, and so they could relate.

Google failed to keep their promise of "Don't Be Evil", and Microsoft's, "One Desktop for Every Desk and Every Home" motto now resulted in those devices becoming data collection, advertising, and surveillance tools. The group vowed to be better and decided the slogan for RealOS would be "One OS, By the People, and For the People".

Our next stop was Burning Man, after a short detour to experience the Pinball Hall of Fame in Las Vegas.

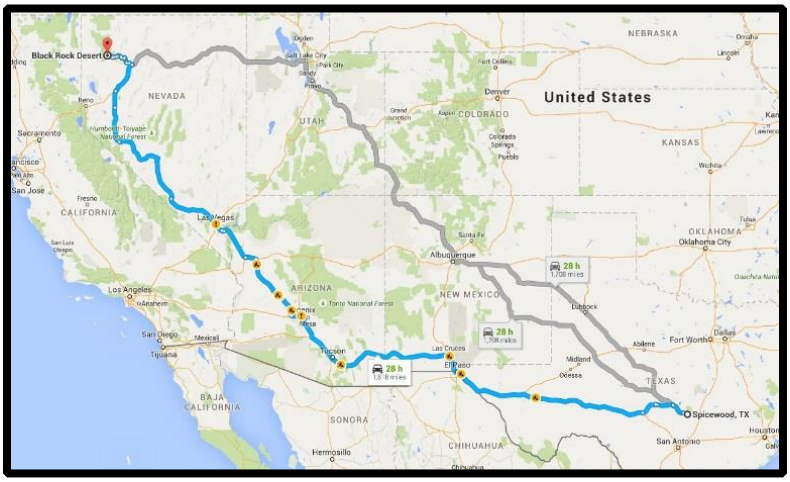


Image Courtesy: maps.google.com

Our group still comprised myself, Hwrx, JNC, BBBB, Preferreduser, MT, Dozrguy, and Michigan Mary, and of course Colakid, would roll out down the road in their luxury "Willie" bus via I-10W, through west Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and into Nevada.

As we rolled into "Vegas" the digital billboard sign read, "Located only ten minutes from the Las Vegas Strip on the famous Tropicana Avenue, and across the street from the Liberace Museum. The Pinball Hall of Fame has your favorite pinball games and a lot more."

According to our fearless leader back at Lake of the Woods who recommended the stop, the Pinball Hall of Fame[74] is the realized dream of Michigan native Tim Arnold. For many years, Tim's Pinball Pete's arcades were a leisure time must for students who attended the University of Michigan as well as Michigan State University. They served the Ann Arbor and East Lansing residents as well. Chuck, don't even think or dream of calling me Charles, was told stories by his dad Dave about his squandered youth at the "Pinball Pete's" location back home in Lansing.

[74] *The Pinball Hall of Fame is the public side of the Las Vegas Pinball Collectors Club and displays over two hundred pinball games in perfect working order from nearly all of pinball history.*

Starting in the early 1990s however, Tim's focus changed. He sold his interest in the arcades to his brothers and he and his wife moved to Las Vegas to pursue a new dream. His then 1000 pinball machine collection, moved as well.

Once there, our group sought out Tim and he remembered Dave from those days and welcomed us as a long lost extended family.

Tim explained that about four hundred different 1950s to 1990s vintage pinball games existed here. "Games range between twenty-five and fifty cents and the older games from the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s are prevalent here, as this time period, pre personal computers, was the 'heyday' of pinball. We have super rare machines such as Williams' Black Gold, Bally's Pinball Circus, and the Recreativos Franco's Impacto. The museum is run as a non-profit he continued, and any excess revenues beyond operational costs are donated to non-denominational charities."

Some might call the place sketchy and dirty, but we had a blast here playing like kids, for a couple hours, trying out the many different machines. Hand written note cards displayed on the machines explained their history. The noise was amazing to hear, the sounds of clicking and pinball chimes throughout the building. They thanked and made their goodbyes to Tim, as they walked out of the air conditioning and into the hot Nevada sun. The group declared this to have been a great time and now could check this off their Bucket Lists.

Then off we went, down the road and into the Black Rock Desert. *To be continued…*

Insider quotes from the Insider Forum.

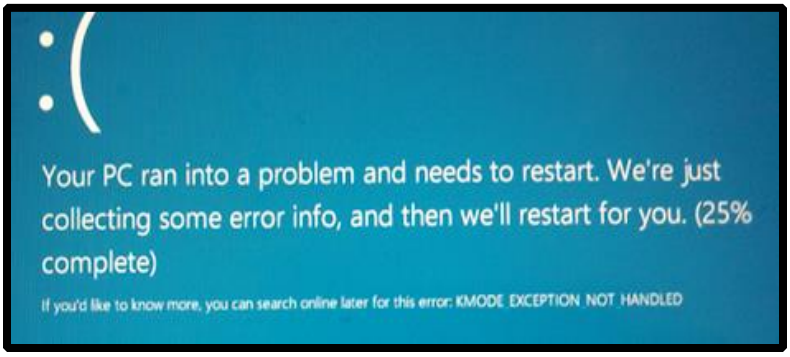
"I may not agree on what the perfect OS design is, but I do agree that Windows 10 ain't it."

"Windows 10 is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're going to get."

Windows 10-"Stupid is, as stupid does."

More news stories hit the interwebs.

Thirty-day Win10 experiment lasts only a week
Lincoln Spector
It was intended as a month-long immersion in Windows 10 and a test of using the new OS on a hybrid laptop.
But the experiment ended after just seven days. It turned out that upgrading a hybrid laptop/tablet was a trial of Blue Screen of Death (BSoD's) and compatibility issues.
… I was suffering my first experience of the Win10 version of a Blue Screen of Death (but not the last). Surprisingly, it's a big improvement over the vintage BSoD. Instead of the usual technical mumbo-jumbo, you see a big, sad-face emoticon (which I dubbed the Friendly Face of Death — FFoD) and clear, concise text that tells you what to search for online.



This image is unfortunately courtesy of Microsoft

Windows 10 is now running on an astounding 75 million PCs.

Microsoft made the new version of Windows available as a free download for Windows 7 and Windows 8.1 customers just one month ago. That's double the pace of Windows 8 installations after its first month of availability. It took Microsoft nearly five months to get to Windows 7 installed on 90 million PCs.

There's nothing quite like a free upgrade to get customers downloading like crazy. Windows 10 has also gotten widely positive reviews, as opposed to the much-loathed Win8.

Pent-up demand for PCs and back-to-school sales have given Windows 10 a jolt too, according to Mika Kitagawa, analyst at tech consultancy Gartner. PC sales fell by 9.5% last quarter -- the biggest decline in two years -- as consumers were holding out for PCs loaded with Win10.

Microsoft said the electric pace of Windows 10 downloads has been a global phenomenon: The operating system has been downloaded in at least once in 192 countries.

A broad spectrum of customers are downloading Windows 10. In an effort to ensure that every customer who downloads Windows 10 has a PC that can handle it, Microsoft has been rolling out the upgrades gradually as it tests some of the less common PC models for bugs. The company said Windows 10 has been installed on 90,000 unique PC models so far. Some customers with eight-year old PCs have even been downloading Windows 10.

Xbox customers have been taking advantage of Windows 10's streaming video game feature. More than 122 years of gaming have been streamed from Xbox consoles to Windows 10 PCs so far, Microsoft announced.

Windows 10's Siri-like virtual assistant Cortana has told more than 500,000 jokes over the past month, and Windows 10 customers have unlocked more than 10 million Solitaire and Minecraft achievements.

The best news for Microsoft is that customers are finally taking to the Windows Store. Windows 10 customers are downloading six-times as many apps as Windows 8 customers, the company reported. Microsoft has been unable to jump-start its app store, which notably lags Google (GOOGL, Tech30) and Apple (AAPL, Tech30) in terms of number of apps, popular software and number of downloads.

Still, Microsoft has a long way left to its goal. The company said it believes 1 billion devices will be running Windows 10 in the next two to three years. CNNMoney (New York)

Few positive press reviews were being written now, much unlike previous Windows versions. Windows 7 received much acclaim in its day, critics noting the increased usability and functionality when compared to its immediate predecessors, Vista, and XP.

- *CNET gave Windows 7 Home Premium a rating of 4.5 out of 5 stars, stating that it "is more than what Vista should have been, and is where Microsoft needed to go."*
- *PC Magazine rated it a 4 of 5 saying that Windows 7 is a "big improvement" over Windows Vista, with fewer compatibility problems, a retooled taskbar, simpler home networking, and fast start-up.*
- *Maximum PC Magazine gave Windows 7 a rating of 9 out of 10 and called Windows 7 a "massive leap forward" in usability and security, and praised the new Taskbar as "worth the price of admission alone."*
- *PC World Magazine called Windows 7 a "worthy successor" to Windows XP and said that speed benchmarks showed Windows 7 to be slightly faster than Vista. PC World also named Windows 7 one of the best products of the year.*
- *In its review of Windows 7, Engadget Magazine said that Microsoft had taken a "strong step forward" with Windows 7 and reported that speed is one of Windows 7's major selling points – particularly for the netbook sets.*
- *Laptop Magazine gave Windows 7 a rating of 4 out of 5 stars and said that Windows 7 makes computing more intuitive, offered better overall performance including a "modest to dramatic" increase in battery life on laptop computers.*
- *TechRadar Magazine gave Windows 7 a rating of 5 out of 5 stars concluding, "It combines the security and architectural improvements of Windows Vista with better performance than XP can deliver on today's hardware. No version of Windows is ever*

perfect, but Windows 7 really is the best release of Windows yet."

- *The New York Times, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, and The Telegraph also gave Windows 7 favorable reviews.*

Our course, downloaded 75 million times does not mean running on 75 million machines, particularly if the Win7 and Win8 market shares remain unchanged, Lefty thought. It was daily active users that count, not downloads, or installs. Win10 growth was statistically flat, indicating that the rate of uninstalling was as frequent as was installing. The evidence was present in our monitoring of the Windows 10 forums. The whole numbers game being played here by MS, reminded Lefty of an old joke.

A mathematician, engineer, and statistician are interviewed for the same job.

Each of them is individually asked only one question.

The mathematician is interviewed first and is asked, "What is 2 + 2?" to which he answers, "A simple problem in which we must prove the identity of the addition operator. I can show you the proof; I'll start with L'Hospital's theorem.[75] *Can I borrow your chalk and blackboard?"*

The engineer is second and is offered the same question. "Your problem provides only a single digit of significance; I'd have to say the answer is 4, plus or minus 1."

The third applicant. "What's 2 + 2?" The statistician gets up from his chair, closes the window blinds, then closes the door, and slyly asks the interviewers, "What do YOU want the answer to be?"

[75] *In mathematics, L'Hôpital's rule uses derivatives to help evaluate limits involving indeterminate forms.*

Lefty posted a news article in a message to the forum.

> ***Microsoft pushes out three updates for Windows 10, no details on what's included in them***
> *Kareem Anderson / Aug 27*
> *Windows 10 is arguably considered to be in rough development for some. Check almost any forum or comment section and the pages of complaints, missing features or borked functionality seem limitless. However, the Windows team seems poised to respond quickly to growing complaints and demands as they have issued several updates addressing specific issues as well tailoring fixes for others.*
> *Three updates were published to Windows 10 users on build 10240. While Windows Insiders tend to get updates, fixes, patches and features quicker than other Windows users, today's updates are specifically popping up on devices running build 10240.*
> *As of right now, it is unclear what the updates entail, as there is no changelog accompanying them. The cumulative updates read, KB3081449, KB3081452, and KB3081448. Without specific call outs or detailed change logs, it seems safe to assume these updates are probably bug fixes in nature.*

An Insider commented on this: You know, the fanbois used to claim that forced updates would not be a problem because Insiders would test them ahead of time. We used to say that its nonsense, because Insiders will be getting Redstone / Threshold 2 builds, instead of regular KB updates and it turns out that we were right all along.

Then came a revelation that MS had truly become evil. They had been doing data collection under the guise of telemetry[76], from Windows Vista on, or maybe even back to Windows 98. But never quite as boldly, unapologetically, or comprehensively before. This is perhaps in part due to the recent common availability of high speed *always-on* Internet connections.

> ***Microsoft intensifies data collection on Windows 7 and 8 systems***
> *By Martin Brinkmann on August 28*
> *Microsoft has been criticized by privacy advocates in regards to the data hunger of its Windows 10 operating system. The operating system slurps data like there is no tomorrow, especially when systems are set up using the express settings.*
> *Experienced users may disable telemetry and data collection partially during setup, and then some more afterwards using the Registry editor or Group Policy editor.*
> *What makes this problematic however is the fact that it is nearly impossible to stop all of the data collecting that is taking place.*
> *While users may disable some, by using privacy tools (of which there are plenty), others cannot be disabled or stopped that easily, for instance because of hardcoded host and IP address information that bypass the Hosts file[77] of the operating system.*
> *Windows 7 and 8*
> *Update KB3068708*
> *Windows 7 and 8 users have been plagued by "upgrade preparation" updates but left alone otherwise up until recently when it comes to this new level of data collecting.*
> *This changed recently with the release of several updates for both operating systems that step up the game.*
> *KB3068708 Update for customer experience and diagnostic telemetry - This update introduces the Diagnostics and Telemetry tracking service to existing devices. By applying this service, you can add benefits from the latest version of Windows to systems that have not yet upgraded. The update*

[76]*Telemetry is an automated communications process by which data is collected at remote points (user PC's) and transmitted to receiving equipment for monitoring. (MS servers)*
[77] *The computer hosts file is an operating system file that translates human-friendly hostnames into numeric computer friendly IP addresses.*

also supports applications that are subscribed to Visual Studio Application Insights. (Windows 8.1, Windows Server 2012 R2, Windows 7 Service Pack 1 (SP1), and Windows Server 2008 R2 SP1)
KB3022345 (replaced by KB3068708) Update for customer experience and diagnostic telemetry - This update introduces the Diagnostics and Telemetry tracking service to in-market devices. By applying this service, you can add benefits from the latest version of Windows to systems that have not yet been upgraded. The update also supports applications that are subscribed to Visual Studio Application Insights. (Windows 8.1, Windows Server 2012 R2, Windows 7 Service Pack 1 (SP1), and Server 2008 R2 SP1)
KB3075249 Update that adds telemetry points to consent.exe in Windows 8.1 and Windows 7 - This update adds telemetry points to the User Account Control (UAC) feature to collect information on elevations that come from low integrity levels. (Windows 8.1, Windows RT 8.1, Windows Server 2012 R2, Windows 7 Service Pack 1 (SP1), and Windows Server 2008 R2 SP1)
KB3080149 Update for customer experience and diagnostic telemetry -This package updates the Diagnostics and Telemetry tracking service to existing devices. This service provides benefits from the latest version of Windows to systems that have not yet upgraded. The update also supports applications that are subscribed to Visual Studio Application Insights. (Windows 8.1, Windows RT 8.1, Windows Server 2012 R2, Windows 7 Service Pack 1 (SP1), and Windows Server 2008 R2 SP1)
If these updates are installed on the system, data is sent to Microsoft regularly about activities on it.
Microsoft lists two host names in KB3068708 that data is received from and sent to:
vortex-win.data.microsoft.com and
settings-win.data.microsoft.com
These, appear to be hardcoded which means that the Hosts file is bypassed automatically.
What you can do about it?
The best way to deal with these updates is to make sure they are not installed. If they have been installed already, you may want to disable them.
You may remove those updates using the Control Panel, or by running the following commands using an elevated command prompt:
wusa /uninstall /kb:3068708 /quiet /norestart
wusa /uninstall /kb:3022345 /quiet /norestart

wusa /uninstall /kb:3075249 /quiet /norestart
wusa /uninstall /kb:3080149 /quiet /norestart
It is recommended to "hide" them afterwards so that they are not picked up and installed again on the computer system.

Martin Brinkmann is a journalist from Germany who founded Ghacks Technology News Back in 2005.

Responses to Microsoft intensifies data collection on Windows 7 and 8 systems
Tom Hawack August 28
I remember the good old times when I'd simply run Windows Updates in full confidence without even checking the updates (I never had auto-update nevertheless). Now on every Patch Tuesday (and out-of-band[78]) I just cannot blindly update anymore : I've become suspicious, mainly for the reasons this article details. Microsoft is no longer my friend. They may laugh about it, rational minds may be hilarious about involving feelings within a commercial transaction, but I think that when an increasing number of everyday users are no longer confident it's not good for the company, not good at all.
Reply
Martin put up: "Windows 10 stats: 75 million devices..."
75 million! I care deeply about this spying and these privacy invasions, but off the top of my head, I know almost no one else who cares as much about it as I do.
I see Microsoft as just charging ahead, regardless of a relative handful of disgruntled users, and growing bolder by the day in its spying, as this article indicates.
Reply
Mystique August 29
Once again there are a few people that are fine with that, we may as well all burn our clothes, walk around naked and share our credit card numbers. An OS should aim to serve the user not the other way around. The sad thing is that Microsoft have shot themselves in the foot here and all this is doing is creating distrust, it's terribly obvious that people will not be doing updates at this point which I guess it's why Microsoft will not give you an option anymore, they will force you to update automatically and not only that I believe they also mentioned that some updates will be of non-description (Sound suspicious to you?)

[78] *Out-of-band updates are those delivered outside of a regular schedule.*

Regardless of company no one should be obligated to submit any sort of data or personal information to any company especially an OS which is so involved in everything you do on your PC in fact this has taken the P out of PC, there is no Personal Computer or computing anymore... GG Microsoft, thank you for showing us how much you regard us and value our rights and our privacy.
I have been thinking about buying a new HDD and installing Linux Mint on it at least as a trial to see how comfortable I feel. I know there are some things I am going to miss dearly that may never be available on Linux and I will have to jump through so many hurdles to achieve what I once could have in windows so easily before but I guess in time I will warm to it but deep down I will hope that Linux does improve and Microsoft takes a long hard look at itself but I doubt it, there are just far too many people willing to give up there freedoms and take it laying down, the Snowden leaks should have been enough to inspire a complete revolt and for people to overthrow governments but I guess if that was okay and people barely bat an eye then Microsoft saw opportunity to get involved to and know that there would be little to no resistance from society at large. We are all to blame for this and should apologies to our future generations for allowing this to happen in our lifetimes.
Drama... maybe but there is an element of truth behind it too and deep down we all know it no matter how we word it we are now simply a product of corporations, the new era and acronym of PC.

> The distance between governing and ruling is measured in the capacity to exercise power without accountability. The lies matter. — Edward Snowden

Lefty then posted another story. Both his profiles became blocked within an hour of posting, Drew1906, and (srfreeman), the latter being used to upload the story. This was the second to last story in the series. So close, but yet so far.

Insider Story 1010

The decrepit and weather beaten sign, fronting a backdrop of parched sand as far as the eye could see, read "Welcome to the Black Rock Desert". Yikes! I thought.

A desolate sign in a desolate place

The Guy Fawkes Mask Group, Hula_Baloo, CrazyKats, FredWilson_905, and Techie007L, purchased the $400 entrance tickets and a $50 vehicle pass for us. They were using an eight-person yurt for lodging setup out on the deserts edge, where some of the group camped. Of course, Dozrguy and Michigan Mary brought their own tent along from Sturgis.

The nice Yurt

Hula_Baloo, now near the end of his work visa, could only stay until the events end. He was a retired, scientific application programmer, system programmer, systems engineer, and software architect. He took a short-term contract job here in the States, because he liked installing and troubleshooting school classroom

computers. His work on RealOS primarily involved the email search functions within the WinFS database. When we arrived, he had already setup a tent and computer lab at BM, volunteering to provide free email and Internet access and teach Windows classes in his spare time. The team also used the lab to demonstrate RealOS, under the temporary code name of Blackrock, to solicit improvements and refinement suggestions to the UI and its integrated programs from the burners camped here.

CrazyKats was a solid technical person who helped make the email client user interface correct, and provided unique insights from a user's perspective.

FredWilson_905, aka WilN937, was a solid programmer who helped create the email protocols to control encryption past the first hop from a client to its configured outgoing mail server. Currently, email messages are transmitted with or without encryption depending solely on the configuration of the transmitting server, and the technical capabilities of the receiving one. He created the code to maintain encryption end to end, regardless of the server configuration.

Techie007L was our key windows programmer who headed up the Dark Mail client software project. As a lover of classical music and a violin musician himself, he felt right at home among the artsy folk at BM. He helped us because he noticed early on MS was headed in the wrong direction, and was now absent any vision or internal structure. He had concluded that they are now completely out of touch with what the public wanted.

The Guy Fawkes Mask Group, having been there for a while became BM experts, clued us in regarding local details of interest.

"As you may know, Burning Man takes place for a week at the end of August and early September, here in the Black Rock Desert of Nevada. Participants, or burners as they are called, joined the effort to co-create Black Rock City, a temporary metropolis dedicated to art and community. Burning Man is guided by the ten basic principles, but their philosophies also include:

- To explore what could be created inside the world if everyone wasn't busy earning money
- To think, act, and dress differently
- To allow people to have permission to be whatever they want to be, at a place where the why not, overwhelms the why
- To create an environment where participation is required, and there are no spectators

The Playa

Notables attending Burning Man included, Anne Hathaway, Susan Sarandon, General Wesley Clark, Stacy Keibler, and from Silicon valley, Tyler Winklevoss, Elon Musk, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, the Google founders, and Jeff Bezos, of Amazon, and of course Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook.

Notable quote: "If you haven't been, you just don't get it," entrepreneur Elon Musk speaking about Burning Man

Burning Man is an annual festival initiated instigated by San Francisco bohemians, and the hippies back in 1986, has grown from 250 to now 60,000 plus burners. The goal is to create a temporary wooden city, Black Rock City, dedicated to community, art, self-expression, and self-reliance. Food, water, shelter, and art are brought in, and then taken away at the end, true to their Leave No Trace edict. This is a gift economy, no buying or selling allowed on the playa, which is their term for the desert surface. The attendees depart a week later, leaving no trace of having been there whatsoever. Burning the Man represents burning things that may represent your negative memories or trapped negative emotions, or beliefs. This is a great technique to set yourself free of negativity and destruction.

Giving frees everyone from the familiarity of our own needs, while opening our minds to the unexplained world now occupied by the needs of others. Giving and receiving food and other material things without money involved, is like getting our spiritual level upgraded to a higher place. Giving and receiving love, compassion, creativity, friendship and fun without any agenda, is what this is all about.

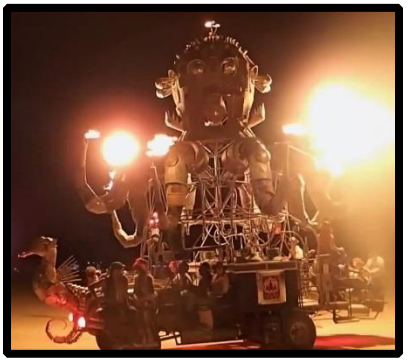
The RealOS group came to Burning Man to not only meet up with the Guy Fawkes masks guys and further test the code, but also for the experience of this unique event while still in existence. This year's motto was "A city in the desert. A culture of possibility. A network of dreamers and doers." This was all about the creation of interactive art.

For those who couldn't be on the playa in person, BM offered a live stream via YouTube straight out of Black Rock City.

The playa windstorms were brutal

The weather was unforgivingly brutal at the desert surface, the poor o'l Willie bus getting sand blasted daily. Some of the group lived inside, others made the Yurt home, and still others found accommodations with other burners at the event. The bus became the primary workspace for the group to stay out of the desert playa dust and dirt. The excellent air conditioning circulation came in handy. The group used laptop video conferences, wirelessly connected to a large screen, and via the satellite dish connected to the video conference system back at Lake of the Woods, as well as remote connections to our other teammates.

Many thousands of bicycles, many hundreds of trucks, art cars, and odd homemade vehicles of many types, crossed the playa. Many appeared to have come out of the set of a Mad Max movie.



A news alert had spread by word of mouth, "we are expecting sustained high winds in Black Rock City beginning midnight Friday, peaking 10 a.m. Saturday morning, and continuing through 6 p.m. Saturday evening." Am starting to miss the Lake of the Woods now, I thought.

Beyond sightseeing, the Guy Fawkes mask group worked while traveling to BM to create a secure email client for RealOS, named Dark Mail. Making the obligatory stops to view the World's Largest Buffalo, and others. While at Burning Man, they tested their email client in the various beta versions of RealOS that the Lake of the Woods group provided to them, primarily working with VJJ remotely. Because of the hooks[79] within RealOS's default relational WinFS file system, email messages would be completely searchable in a rich, granular, and extensible manner. Email is automatically encrypted using PGP during import, export, and transit to the end user, to provide true "end to end encryption". The typical public and private key system is replaced with a more user-friendly token system.

Emails sent with the Dark Mail client software baked into the RealOS operating system were automatically encrypted, so that a user of a RealOS system would be sent a symmetric encryption key, which would decrypt the email and present the decrypted text directly within the email client software. A user of a non-RealOS system was sent a token, which would decrypt the email and present it to a TLS or Transport Layer Security, encrypted web mail site that was designated by the end user.

The "baked-in" RealOS web browser, named "Interweb Scout", provides end-to-end encryption of web traffic due to forcing contacted servers into HTTPS[80] mode and using TLS to encrypt traffic using HTML6. We recruited web pioneer Tim Berners-Lee to help the

[79] *In computer programming, hooking involves altering the behavior of an operating system, by intercepting function calls passed between software components. Computer code that handles such intercepted function calls, events, or messages, are called hooks.*

[80] *HTTPS is a communications protocol for secure communication over a computer network which is widely used on the Internet.*

group, primarily Renee and Amii, over the summer to design and test this critical software piece.

RealOS would automatically encrypt data on the computer, attached drives, and network shares during the installation process. User data would be entirely searchable in a rich, granular, and extensible manner because of the hooks within RealOS's default relational WinFS file system. Nigthhawk and Chuck, don't even think or dream about calling me Charles, did a brilliant job managing this. Brad at Starhatch was extremely pleased having brought them both into the project.

A couple of guys, Mike Kerbin and Michael Masters, created the remarkable code to search inside encrypted data. The British expatriate now living in Portugal and the retired programmer residing in Dallas, had connected over the Insider forum. They shared a common disgust for Windows 10, the NSA, as well as corporate spying, so they hatched the mathematical ideas necessary to accomplish this task.

This ended up being so successful that it allowed the group to encrypt the entire OS codebase, using one processor core to decrypt the code inside of RAM, before being sent to the other core(s) within the processor for execution. RealOS would require a dual core processor as a minimum, but would work on computers as many as ten years old.

The OS encryption prevented any security problems, malware attacks etc. and eliminated continuous security updates to protect the OS from attackers. Patch Tuesday aka Black Tuesday, ingrained in Windows users for decades, would now become a thing of the past. As the 4096-bit RSA standard had been broken via acoustic cryptanalysis[81], they chose the 8192-bit code developed by the team of Elon Musk, Jacob Appelbaum, and Ladar Levison. They worked with the RSA encryption algorithm created in conjunction with co-inventor Leonard Adleman, as well as cryptography innovator Manuel Blum, to accomplish this critically important and massive task.

---

[81] *In cryptography, acoustic cryptanalysis is an attack that exploits the sounds emitted by computers. Acoustic cryptanalysis focuses on the sounds produced from computer keyboards and internal computer components.*

> The OS would be updated over time, adding feature enhancements based on user requests. The fee charged for the RealOS was used to fund free technical support and future RealOS enhancements. Starhatch according to their CEO Brad Ward would manage all of this.
>
> The RealOS code was open for everyone to read, modify, add to,[82] and became available for download in many languages via RealOS.org at $49.99 for business use, and $29.99 for consumer use. There would not be multiple versions. Everyone would receive everything. This included an installation program which allows users choice over whatever options they wanted to install at any time. RealOS would be available via download, on DVD disc, USB drive or on a Blu-ray disc which also included high-definition BM video demos.
>
> The announcement of the availability of RealOS would be made just prior to the "Burn the Man" ceremony at the event.[83]
>
> *To be continued…*

Lefty came back into the Insider Forum, after creating yet another new profile.

He was now using profile names coming out of his stories to allow his fellow Insiders to follow who he was, as time and the user bans continued. This most likely would not be the last profile name he would need, the way this had been going.

> *Hello RealOS, We're glad that you joined us. The Microsoft Community welcomes novice users who are looking for help, technology experts who are looking to share their expertise, and everyone in between. Now that you've registered, you can ask questions, reply to posts, start or join discussions, or*

---

[82] *Open-source software has its source code published and made available to the public, enabling anyone to copy, modify, and redistribute the source code without paying royalties or fees.*

[83] *There would be ten million downloads in the first day, 100 million in the first week and a half billion by the end of the first month. The newly expanded and contracted data center servers co-located at Starhatch fluttered and strained, but held up from the load, reaching as high as 95% of capacity at one point.*

comment on the latest wiki articles. Pretty soon, you might start earning badges and awards too!

Get started today

Type your question in the search box and press Enter. You'll get a list of great ideas from other members of our community. From there, you can join an existing conversation or start your own.

Update your profile

See your thread history, add a profile picture, or change your email address, all in your profile page. See you online!

The Microsoft Community team

Messages continued flowing in the Insider Forum.

JNC replied on September 2

In reply to zachd [MSFT]'s post on September 2

"People on online forums can be terrible to each other, and I apologize for that. I'm not one of those people and I'm actively trying to making something better that we all care about. We can either help me look into this or people can keep actively getting in the way of making Windows better. I'd strongly prefer the former. :)"

Zach, while it's encouraging to hear someone on the "inside" evoking positive images, you'll have to forgive users for a certain suspension of belief.

Your engineers clearly ***removed*** *the very things people are asking for. The things that make a desktop usable.*

You either did it ***on purpose****, which implies nefarious motives by a power higher than you, or* ***by accident****, which implies, well, we don't really want to go there.*

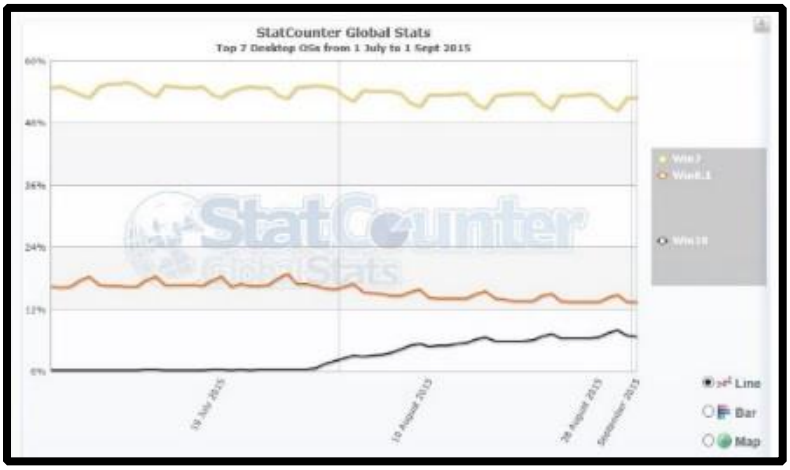
Please don't raise false hopes here by claiming that it might be possible to have all the Win 10 ridiculous reduction in usability just blow over and that reconstitution of the usability your predecessors designed may be just around the corner. You folks had PLENTY of feedback starting on the first day of the pre-release program.

Take a look at the [lack of] adoption figures amongst Win 7 users some time. You're not succeeding even in giving this OS away.

Not to belabor the point but let me illustrate:

Resample the graph to be smaller in the horizontal dimension so as to make it easier to see the curves, and it becomes clear Windows 7 users are no longer falling for the "FREE!" hype,

and Win 10 adoption is even starting to fall off even amongst Windows 8.1 users!



As an engineer with almost 40 years' experience and who has been an early adopter of every Microsoft product since there was a Microsoft, I'm keeping my highly modified and throttled Win 8.1 Pro setup myself. What does that tell you? -JNC

"Fools multiply when wise men are silent." - Nelson Mandela

Using his new profile name RealOS, Lefty posted again in the Insider Forum.

In reply to Martin Gerhold (original)'s post on September 4 "I am disappointed enough in W10 (in some respects), I don't want to stifle any enthusiasm for improving it. I agree that now does seem a bit late to be fixing up mistakes present since last autumn, but better late than never."

RealOS Reply

So we have gotten to this point now where we are happy and excited about maybe being able sometime in the future, pretty please, to set windows borders to what we can actually see?

Many of us asked for a modern vintage OS with:

1. *A modern 3D skeuomorphic interface with Aero Glass*
2. *An operating system that took advantage of all the CPU, GPU and SSD hardware improvements since Win7*

3. *Anti-malware software that works, before and potentially after, infections*
4. *A firewall that we could protect our systems with, from the NSA and from Microsoft*
5. *A file system built on a relational database for a visual, extensible, relational, and granular search of rich objects*
6. *A useable web browser with end to end encryption of our web traffic*
7. *A useable email client with end to end encryption of our personal and professional correspondence*
8. *A Media Center client updated to include streaming and other newer innovations*
9. *Support for high resolution displays including a sufficient number of fonts, and font rendering to match*
10. *An end to endless Black Tuesday updates and reboots*

Not to mention all the things Microsoft promised under the codenames Cairo, Blackcomb (Vienna), and Longhorn in the past.

Early on in this forum we dissenters thought that if we just had Win7 SP2 we could settle for that. But nooo...

Disappointments up and down the line, eventually turn people bitter over the course of a year.

"The future ain't what it used to be." Yogi Berra

Posting about what could have been, Insiders continued writing about what was, occasionally getting philosophical.

AllanM2014 replied

In reply to zachd [MSFT]'s post on September 4

While it is possible this will never be seen, I'd like to politely and simply add my support to the short and well worded list given by RealOS a few posts above this one.

I'm not so concerned with his mentioned encryption or built in protection but I can see why others are.

I myself am a heavy user of third party programs, some hailing from the Win98 days when they were conceived (a freeware video editor I use almost daily specifically - VirtualDub). That is to me the most brilliant thing with Windows. The ability to use third party programs - for many years without incident.

I do video production on Win7 and am often in the middle of a dozen open windows and folders across multiple drives on multiple monitors. The GUI and the "pretty" matter to me a lot. Big fan of Aero. Some parts of my system now hit the 7.9 experience rating so obviously I'm not concerned with the miniscule additional use of resources required for Aero style. To me Aero was actually a big reason to upgrade when it first came out.

I have of course posted this in the feedback a couple of times months ago as have hundreds of others.

Top of my list: Aero, Start menu (not start "list" with metro), Program based programs not metro style apps. I didn't build a glorified cell phone to do video production on :)

Thank you for your input.

"If you want to know what God thinks about money, just look at the people he gives it to." - Old Irish Saying

Lefty posted his own two cents into a message thread.

Reply In reply to GoNonpro's post on September 5

"As for me, the word futility describes my TechPreview experience.

I've said it before and will say it again, The software being pushed out is secondary to the new modern strategy MS has adopted. An ideal pipedream concept of international goodwill to mankind involving everything EXCEPT a powerful, stable, Secure OS that takes full advantage of state of the art hardware. State of the art Hardware that is now cheap/commonly available.

Microsoft needs to sell impressive software, and leave philanthropy to the charitable organizations."

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead

RealOS replied on September 5

A global surveillance tool, disguised as an ideal pipedream concept of international goodwill to mankind, and given away for free following traditional malware distribution patterns. Developed at the lowest cost possible and made to run on the maximum number possible of devices connected to the global internet.

"Good writers borrow, Great writers steal." Oscar Wilde. Personally, I steal and change avatars and taglines regularly.

Hello RealOS,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from Techie007L.

Title: There is not a single redeeming thing about Windows 10, is there?

JohnReuters replied

"I can't help thinking that MS somehow is a victim of its own success, its earlier GUI paradigms have helped trained and conditioned the mind of the Windows users in the past 30 years or so, now these users get older and they rather stick to what they are used to MS moved on to a more elegant, modern GUI design. However, as time move on, the older users will become fewer, and fewer, but I suspect the same pattern will happen again, the Windows 8.1/Windows 10 generations will oppose bitterly in around 10, 20 years when the world is ready to move on to a next, new GUI paradigm."

"One must learn by doing the thing. For though you think you know it, you have no certainty until you try." - Sophocles

Techie007L replied

Reality check: There are plenty of younger people out there who prefer the earlier (and more mature) Windows UIs, and plenty of older people who are enthusiastically adopting the new toy UI. As another poster pointed out (somewhere recently), generally the more you know, the less you like Windows 10's UI. Windows 10's current incarnation and UI are anything but elegant (and to help eliminate subjectivity, here are the synonyms and antonyms of that word).

Just look around! Windows 10 is totally kludged together, plain and dull. Barring the beautiful wallpapers, the OS is badly lacking in color, taste, and tone. Some title bars are tall, some are short, some are colored, some are gray (Settings), and

others are white (Calculator). With the gray and white ones, you can't tell which part can be dragged to move the window, and it's hard to discern which window has focus. Some menus have big, tablet-friendly (or desktop screen wasting) spacing and are black, others are the same but white, and yet others are gray with the traditional close spacing (a nightmare on a small tablet). Ironically, they all seem to ignore the Tablet Mode setting, a lame feature that does little more than disable the desktop (which I use as my primary launch space on my tablet, just like on my laptop and desktop).

And then there's the huge mix of different UIs throughout, as another user here likes to argue. What he fails to point out is that Metro/Modern simply adds yet another design style to the mixture instead of reducing/unifying them. Some settings can only be changed in the Control Panel, others only in the Settings app, and yet others only in Computer Management. Worse yet, there are several important options that have been removed from Control Panel and not yet re-implemented in Settings (like enabling the Guest account). Elegant? Think again! At least Windows 7, while not perfect, wasn't so schizophrenic.

Who knows what will happen in 10–20 years? There are some reporters who firmly believe that this new flat thing is a fad/fashion that will soon pass. Google and Apple have a firm stranglehold on mobile computing, and Microsoft's late attempts to enter the game have not been very successful, so maybe Microsoft will get increasingly marginalized, a trend that has been accelerating for the last five years. Both Android and iOS are much prettier and unified OSes. It could go either way. One thing for sure: As vocal as the minority of modern/flat enthusiasts already are, if this fad passes you may be right about the Windows 8/10 generations bitterly opposing the direction of the future!

On a more somber note (speaking of the next 10-20 years), our country's economy is on an unsustainable path and is being desperately propped up right now. Windows 10 could very well soon be the among the least of our troubles.

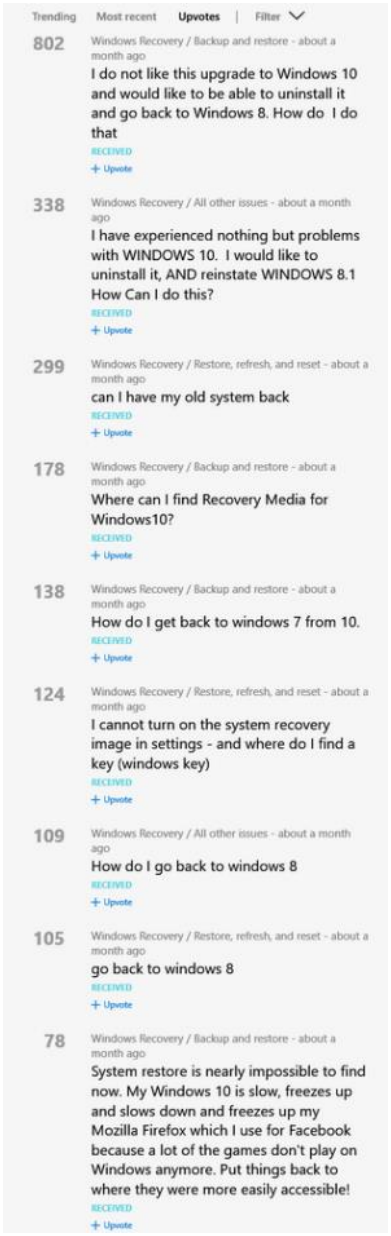
"The difference between genius and stupidity is that genius has its limits." - Albert Einstein

One Saturday about a month after Windows 10 was released, or thrust upon the public, things slowed down some in the Insider Forum, having only two pages of messages on that day. Lefty decided to pop over to the Windows 10 forum, to read a few messages. This message forum was for typical computer users, who installed a retail version of Windows 10, or purchased a machine with the OS preinstalled. They were not testers of the beta versions of Windows. Lefty wanted to see if his assistance was needed, and maybe check if others he knew might be hanging out there.

Yikes! Thirty-nine pages of messages for _one_ day, including a three-page thread titled Windows 10 crashed my computer. These messages both outlined the horrors people were going through, and illuminated the dysfunctional nature of the MS technical support.

> *ElisePearson replied on September 3*
>
> *Same thing happened to me. I reverted my laptop back to windows 8.1 in hopes that it would fix itself and now my computer is trashed. It turns on then glitches up and freezes then I have to take it out the power strip to get it to power down and restart. Thank you Microsoft for frying my computer. I am a nursing student with 2 children. How do you expect me to graduate without a computer?!*

The pain, suffering, and misery MS inflicted on a global scale was become apparent based on user feedback, and Lefty only saw the English language version of these messages.



Trending | Most recent | **Upvotes** | Filter

802 — Windows Recovery / Backup and restore - about a month ago
I do not like this upgrade to Windows 10 and would like to be able to uninstall it and go back to Windows 8. How do I do that
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

338 — Windows Recovery / All other issues - about a month ago
I have experienced nothing but problems with WINDOWS 10. I would like to uninstall it, AND reinstate WINDOWS 8.1 How Can I do this?
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

299 — Windows Recovery / Restore, refresh, and reset - about a month ago
can I have my old system back
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

178 — Windows Recovery / Backup and restore - about a month ago
Where can I find Recovery Media for Windows10?
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

138 — Windows Recovery / Backup and restore - about a month ago
How do I get back to windows 7 from 10.
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

124 — Windows Recovery / Restore, refresh, and reset - about a month ago
I cannot turn on the system recovery image in settings - and where do I find a key (windows key)
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

109 — Windows Recovery / All other issues - about a month ago
How do I go back to windows 8
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

105 — Windows Recovery / Restore, refresh, and reset - about a month ago
go back to windows 8
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

78 — Windows Recovery / Backup and restore - about a month ago
System restore is nearly impossible to find now. My Windows 10 is slow, freezes up and slows down and freezes up my Mozilla Firefox which I use for Facebook because a lot of the games don't play on Windows anymore. Put things back to where they were more easily accessible!
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

74 — Windows Recovery / Backup and restore - about a month ago
I would really like to go back to my old version of windows I do not like windows 10 at all, so I want to know how I can recover my old version of windows, hope you can help me to do this
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

72 — Windows Recovery / All other issues - about a month ago
How do I uninstall Windows 10?
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

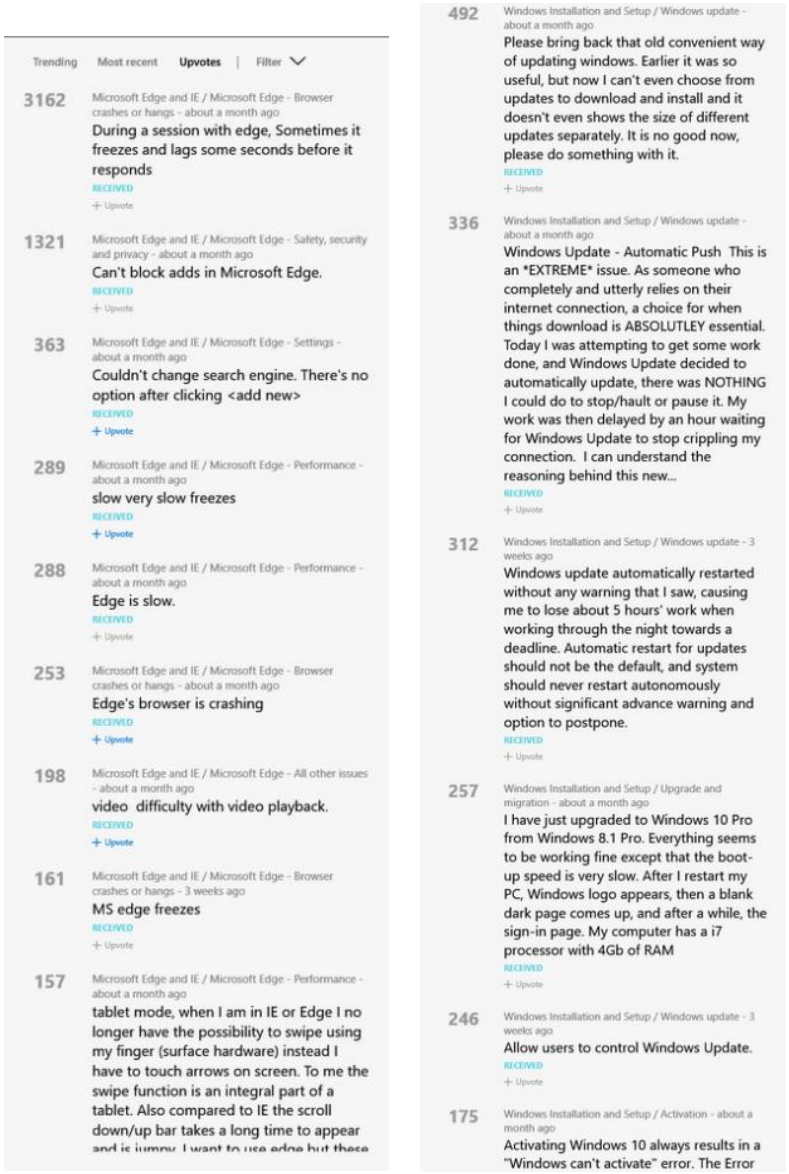
66 — Windows Recovery / Backup and restore - about a month ago
I want my windows 8.1 back!no need of windows 10. hlp me out!
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

61 — Windows Recovery / All other issues - about a month ago
no sound
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

60 — Windows Recovery / Restore, refresh, and reset - about a month ago
need help undoing this upgrade.
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

53 — Windows Recovery / Restore, refresh, and reset - about a month ago
uninstall windows 10 -- I want it OFF my computer NOW!! How do I do that? Who in their right mind creates a program that you can't take off?? I work on this computer and can't get to ANYTHING I need!!
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

52 — Windows Recovery / All other issues - about a month ago
Windows is not "activated" even though I had an OEM version of Windows 8.1 preinstalled. To make matters worse, it won't give me an error code in the activation tab. The page from the link See Support Info Online tells me there should be a Go To Store link to find an activation code or something like that. Well, there is no Go To Store option. So tell what I'm supposed to do if my genuine Windows isn't activated. Sorry if I seem rude, but I paid to have this computer work.
RECEIVED
+ Upvote



Trending Most recent **Upvotes** | Filter

3162 Microsoft Edge and IE / Microsoft Edge - Browser crashes or hangs - about a month ago
During a session with edge, Sometimes it freezes and lags some seconds before it responds
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

1321 Microsoft Edge and IE / Microsoft Edge - Safety, security and privacy - about a month ago
Can't block adds in Microsoft Edge.
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

363 Microsoft Edge and IE / Microsoft Edge - Settings - about a month ago
Couldn't change search engine. There's no option after clicking <add new>
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

289 Microsoft Edge and IE / Microsoft Edge - Performance - about a month ago
slow very slow freezes
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

288 Microsoft Edge and IE / Microsoft Edge - Performance - about a month ago
Edge is slow.
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

253 Microsoft Edge and IE / Microsoft Edge - Browser crashes or hangs - about a month ago
Edge's browser is crashing
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

198 Microsoft Edge and IE / Microsoft Edge - All other issues - about a month ago
video difficulty with video playback.
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

161 Microsoft Edge and IE / Microsoft Edge - Browser crashes or hangs - 3 weeks ago
MS edge freezes
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

157 Microsoft Edge and IE / Microsoft Edge - Performance - about a month ago
tablet mode, when I am in IE or Edge I no longer have the possibility to swipe using my finger (surface hardware) instead I have to touch arrows on screen. To me the swipe function is an integral part of a tablet. Also compared to IE the scroll down/up bar takes a long time to appear and is jumpy. I want to use edge but these

492 Windows Installation and Setup / Windows update - about a month ago
Please bring back that old convenient way of updating windows. Earlier it was so useful, but now I can't even choose from updates to download and install and it doesn't even shows the size of different updates separately. It is no good now, please do something with it.
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

336 Windows Installation and Setup / Windows update - about a month ago
Windows Update - Automatic Push This is an *EXTREME* issue. As someone who completely and utterly relies on their internet connection, a choice for when things download is ABSOLUTLEY essential. Today I was attempting to get some work done, and Windows Update decided to automatically update, there was NOTHING I could do to stop/hault or pause it. My work was then delayed by an hour waiting for Windows Update to stop crippling my connection. I can understand the reasoning behind this new...
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

312 Windows Installation and Setup / Windows update - 3 weeks ago
Windows update automatically restarted without any warning that I saw, causing me to lose about 5 hours' work when working through the night towards a deadline. Automatic restart for updates should not be the default, and system should never restart autonomously without significant advance warning and option to postpone.
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

257 Windows Installation and Setup / Upgrade and migration - about a month ago
I have just upgraded to Windows 10 Pro from Windows 8.1 Pro. Everything seems to be working fine except that the boot-up speed is very slow. After I restart my PC, Windows logo appears, then a blank dark page comes up, and after a while, the sign-in page. My computer has a i7 processor with 4Gb of RAM
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

246 Windows Installation and Setup / Windows update - 3 weeks ago
Allow users to control Windows Update.
RECEIVED
+ Upvote

175 Windows Installation and Setup / Activation - about a month ago
Activating Windows 10 always results in a "Windows can't activate" error. The Error

Then he posted the final story chapter, in the Windows 10 Insider Forum, on a holiday weekend, for the forum member's entertainment. This would complete the fictional adventures of the Merry Band of Misfits and Malcontents, at least for now.

Insider Story 1011

Recent news reports told the story of the global data security collapse, the forced update disaster, and the subsequent removal of Windows10 from the market. These events caused the launch event for the RealOS to garner worldwide news coverage, and carried "live" via the cable channels MSNBC, CNN and others. The Burning Man organizers agreed to the media encroachment because this also insured worldwide viewership of their "burn" ceremony. Following the launch, the subsequent "Burning of the Man" would be widely broadcast for the first time ever.

Nigthhawk, Chuck, don't even think or dream about calling me Charles, Amii, Renee, and VJJ would fly-in to be part of the introductory event.

The RealOS group decided that for maximum impact they needed to use guest presenters for the software demos, although each member of the RealOS group would be identified and introduced to the world.

A 100-foot screen was setup behind the stage, and additional 50-foot wing screens to the left and right.

Edward Snowden[84] live via teleconference from the cable news satellite trucks, would kick off the event. He shared his thoughts about computer surveillance.

Ed Snowden via video conference

[84] *Edward Joseph Snowden, an American computer professional and former contractor for the United States government, copied and leaked classified information from the NSA in 2013. His disclosures revealed numerous illegal and unconstitutional global surveillance programs, run by the NSA with the cooperation of telecommunication companies and foreign governments.*

"I don't want to live in a world where everything I say, everything I do, everyone I talk to, every expression of creativity and love and friendship is recorded."

He then talked about the importance of encryption within RealOS and how the OS now incorporated his previous "Three Tips for Digital Privacy". Things you should not have to do, but for now, you do.

1. Be careful about what you share with corporations, who store your metadata.
2. Encrypt your communications, end to end.
3. Use two-factor authentication, to protect yourself from spoofed communication.

Appearing on stage to thunderous applause, Brad Ward of Starhatch would introduce RealOS and speak about the goals and achievements of the RealOS, and introduce the presenters.

- Ted Nelson of Xanadu fame and Danny Oran of Windows 95 fame, would talk about, and demo the operating system interface.
- Dave and Prime Cutler would talk about and demonstrate the WinFS encrypted file system.
- Phil Zimmermann and Ladar Levison would talk about and demo the Dark Mail email client.
- Marc Andreessen and Tim Berners-Lee would talk about and demo the Interweb Scout browser.

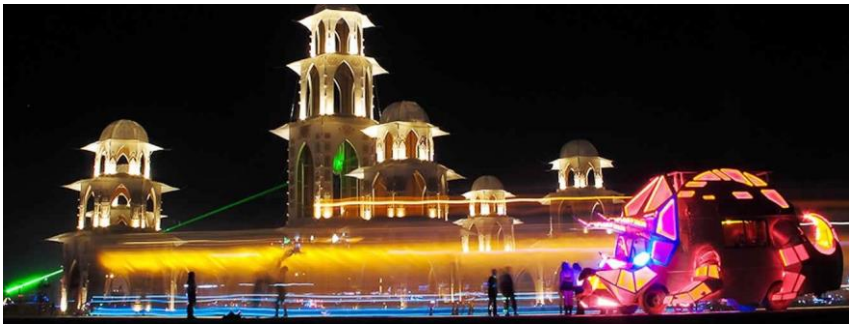
Brad would then wrap up his presentation, stunning the crowd, by announcing that fifty percent of the sales proceeds of the RealOS would be donated to a global initiative created by the Gates Foundation to end world hunger.

The whole event would be short and sweet, and completed within forty-five minutes to insure full coverage by the media, which left another fifteen minutes for news coverage of the "burn" ceremony.

Detailed video demonstrations of RealOS were recorded by each team member and available online directly after the event at RealOS.org and on the Blu-ray installation disc. The site would also include download and installation instructions, and support information provided by Starhatch.

Brad hired Jackson Browne and Neil Young for concerts. The event would kick off with late afternoon concerts as the desert temperature receded.

Jackson would warm up the crowd playing acoustic versions of Casino Nation, Sergio Leone, and Lives in the Balance. Then introducing his guests David Lindley and friends would end his show with a jump up and *dance your ass off* electric rock and roll version of Mercury Blues.



Black Rock City at night

As the sun set over the desert, Neil would take the stage and blast the crowd with rousing extended length versions of Cowgirl in the Sand and Down by the River. He would then invite guest Warren Haynes onstage for his mind bending, glue you to your seat, eardrum-breaking version of his Cortez the Killer.

The subsequent RealOS demos went off without a hitch, and the crowd appeared mentally stunned, having been bombarded with such a massive amount of visual information in such a short time. The RealOS technology demonstrations as viewed projected as sufficiently advanced that the attendees believed they might have been beamed via transporter to sometime into the future. Or perhaps what they saw and heard was accomplished with some kind of magic.[85]

This event was later rightly dubbed as The Mother of All Demos - Part Two.

The cheers and screams of the burners then echoed across the playa as Burning Man's 60-foot wooden "Man" burned to the ground, assisted by fireworks and some explosives. This impressive display helped to create an awe inspiring cleansing ceremony.

[85] *Author Sir Arthur C. Clarke formulated adages known as Clarke's laws. The best known of these is, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."*

The 60 foot wooden Man

Burning the Man

Adding some explosives

Later inside the bus as they celebrated the successful event, a message was displayed on the bus's video conference screen regarding an incoming video conference call emanating out of the White House. The message read, "Please hold for the President of the United States." The now ragged and tired group looked at each other in puzzlement until it dawned on them, "Rats! the NSA!" They apparently had inadvertently dropped their online security focus while at BM.

President Obama came on screen projecting his usual ear-to-ear smile, and those are some big ears. He profusely congratulated the group for our timely and significant accomplishments.

Our President

The President continued to say that he had called with a personal invitation for them to visit the White House in the next week, and for each to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom directly from him at a thank-you ceremony in the White House Rose Garden. He further explained that this award recognized those individuals who have made "an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States". "You have certainly earned this he exclaimed! You are also owed my sincerest personal apology for having been banished from the US, and a big "My Bad" for the whole mistaken Terrorist Watch and Do-Not-Fly Lists thing."

He also mentioned that he previously received a call from long time ARPANET/Internet supporter and former Vice President Al Gore, who monitored the group's activities on the RealOS blog online over the summer. Gore informed him regarding the gravity and significance of our group's accomplishments. The President continued about how this achievement is expressly significant in light of the Windows 10 "SpyGate" fiasco and MS's resultant removal of the OS from the market, leaving global computer users temporarily in the lurch.

We inquired about also expunging their permanent records, Obama laughed and said, "He would get right on that."

Next, they spoke to a staffer, who provided details that included airline tickets, and hotel reservations for our trip to Washington D.C.

The next phone call came from the mayor of New York, and he told them there would be a parade held in their honor in NYC, after their event in DC. The mayor continued on to say that starting in 1886; those who have made significant achievements, heads of state, returning veterans and sport champions from the New York area are honored with ticker-tape parades. The parade would be held along Broadway also known as the "Canyon of Heroes" from the Battery to City Hall. The dozen parade vehicles used would consist of the classic car collection from the Classic Car Club-Manhattan, and included a 1965 Shelby Cobra, 1969 Ford Bronco, and a brand-new Ford Shelby GT350 Mustang.

Later, Willie voice-called on a satellite phone to congratulate us and offered that he heard the great news over the interwebs. He told them not to worry about the bus, as he would have a roadie bring my van out to the desert and drive it back to Texas.

The next day the group learned that while in D.C. they would also receive the Congressional Gold Medal, bestowed by an act of U.S. Congress—the highest civilian award of the United States.

Former Wisconsin US Senator Russ Feingold got together with Senators Ed Markey, Mark Udall, Al Franken, Kristin Gillibrand, Ron Wyden, and Sherrod Brown to put the wheels in motion in Congress. I had volunteered for the Feingold campaign during the nineties, known for its quirky and humorous campaign ads, and he later won that election.

This award is not limited to U.S. citizens, so Colakid, Hula_Baloo, and VJJ could also receive it. This medal is awarded to persons "who have performed an achievement that has an impact on American history and culture that is likely to be recognized as a major achievement in the recipient's field long after the initial achievement".[86]

At the Rose Garden ceremony, Obama praised the vision and the work of our group for a wonderfully useable, stable, and secure computer operating system platform for the whole world. Beyond effectively encrypting the entire Internet end to end, protecting computer users and their families, you also protected corporate and government data he extolled. "If our extensive firewalls, intrusion detection, and other measures fail to keep the bad guys out of our networks he continued, your 8192-bit encryption ensures that our people, and our country remains safe." He then shook each of our hands placing the medals around our necks.

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[86] *The Gold Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom are commonly considered to carry the same level of prestige. The difference between the two is the Freedom Medal is personally awarded by the President of the United States, and Congressional Gold Medals are awarded by Acts of Congress.*

Friends and family showed up to greet us. The entire group stood tall and straight on stage, Dozrguy and Michigan Mary holding hands smiling, and Amii's little girls telling everyone how proud of their mom they felt. The Guy Fawkes group briefly removed their masks and took a bow. Our German friends Aleksey, Amine, Pierre, and Ziliang also joined us up on the stage.

We were all very proud because after only one week, we already had 50 million daily active users worldwide.

The medal

Taking me aside after the event, Obama told me he remembered having enjoyed the Flying Toaster screensaver back when attending college. He particularly liked being able to adjust the number of toasters, and the number and darkness of the slices. He rather shyly inquired if we would bring this back for the RealOS. I laughed and said, "I would get right on that."

The End.

The Cast of Characters

The Good Guys and Gals

Amii – is a mother with young daughters, who is a computer-programming hobbyist, with interests in anime and heavy metal music. She likes family time, PC's, and chats on IRC with tech heads. She dislikes most people and phones. Amii also used the ami32.dll, AmiMizunoGS, and pUnknown profiles.

Colakid – honor graduate, retired residential builder. Quit his Canadian computer company to allow time for enjoyable things. He likes Jolt cola and landscaping mulch. He dislikes people who slander others for standing up to the reality of Win10.

Dozrguy – is a Dakota computer enthusiast and computer system builder. He likes Harleys, operating heavy equipment, Michigan Mary, and Linux, in that order. He dislikes Win10.

VJJ – or the professor as the group knew him. He was a visiting guest lecturer from Eastern Europe working at MIT, before the banishment. He likes user experience analysis, GUI design, & programming. He dislikes Metro, Modern, or Universal interface apps. He has limited active English skills.

JNC – aka "Cool Hand", aka the first A.User, software engineer. He runs a US graphic design business. He likes high performance cutting-edge graphics and image processing software. He dislikes ugly poorly written surveillance software like Win10.

Preferreduser – is an experienced user, and hardware engineer from California. He likes using and building computers, as well as well told stories. He dislikes programming and developing.

BBBB – (Big Bad Bombastic Bob) is a highly skilled programmer, who runs a west coast software engineering company. He likes old school software developing, creating music. He dislikes touch screens, (due to fat fingers and presbyopia), Dot Net, and Windows 10.

Hwrx – is an older wise programmer. Aka GoNonpro. He is old enough to know that President Ford fell down often. He lives in the Pacific Time zone. He likes old cars, cartoon animation, good UI's. He dislikes Windows 10.

Mt – posts most messages using the phrase, "W10, and Start8 have no issues; I will be upgrading my fleet." He likes Start8 and Firefox He dislikes Win10 and Spartan/Edge.

Michigan Mary – is a designer, color coordinator, programmer, and all around good egg. She likes Dozrguy and Harleys. She dislikes Windows 10.

Nigthhawk – Programmer extraordinaire. He likes gaming. He dislikes Windows 10.

Renee – is a serious software developer, with expertise on OS development. She likes computers and VMS. She dislikes sloppy programming, and Windows 10.

Michael Masters – was on DARPANET in the 80's, and is now medically retired. He likes Ronald Reagan. He dislikes living in Dallas where there is no spring or fall, just 5 months of heat and then cold for the rest, and of course, Windows 10.

Mike Kerbin – is from the north UK Yorkshire, and moved to sunny Portugal to retire. He likes being retired and good software. He dislikes Windows 10.

Lefty – is a business entrepreneur, long time computer system builder, refurbisher, and humanitarian. He likes telling stories, rock and roll music, baseball, and computers. He dislikes stupid people, slow computers, and bad software. Aka Lefty21WTF, Drew1905, Drew1906, (srfreeman), RealOS, Johnny Dronehunter, Anonymous Insider, and Chuck Cutler. In the end, each of his eight profiles were eventually banned. He has retired and proudly remains as A.User to this day.

The Guy Fawkes Mask Group

Hula_Baloo – is a retired, scientific application programmer, system programmer, systems engineer, and software architect. He likes installing classroom computers, troubleshooting them, and volunteering to teach Windows classes in his spare time. He dislikes Windows 10.

CrazyKats – is a solid technician who helped in getting the user interface on the email client right. He likes UX and UI design and has unique insights in being able to view things from the user's perspective. He really dislikes Windows 10.

FredWilson_905, aka WilN937 – is a solid programmer who helped create the email protocols to control encryption past the first hop from a client to its configured outgoing mail server. He likes maintaining email encryption all the way to the end user. He dislikes Windows 10 and unencrypted communications.

Techie007L – is a key windows programmer who headed up the Dark Mail project. He likes classical music and playing the violin. He likened using Windows 10 to masturbating with a cheese grater.

The Bosses

Brad Ward – President/CEO of Starhatch. He is the primary funder of the RealOS project. He likes fixing broken software. He dislikes broken software like Windows 10.

Prime Cutler – Was a researcher and developer at MS, first met Lefty and JNC on the Redmond trip. He likes developing elegant software. He dislikes Windows 10.

Chuck, don't even think or dream of calling me Charles, Cutler – is a programmer hired to lead the team to write the codename Granite OS. He likes writing OS code. He dislikes working at Microsoft, and Windows 10.

The Bad Guys

Drew1903 – is a clueless MS fanboy and Insider forum moderator. He likes baiting forum members, tattling, and then having these Windows 10 critics in the Insider Forum banned. He has a cousin working on Windows 10 at Microsoft, and is probably angling for a job there. He dislikes people who don't like Windows 10.

Srfreeman – is an obtuse MS executive, masquerading in the forum as an IT executive. Also rumored to be a bot. He likes his gibberish-generating keyboard, which makes his posts nonsensical and not well liked by most Insiders. He dislikes people who don't like Windows 10.

Peter Dinh – is a self-proclaimed postgraduate MIT student. He likes acting as a Troll within the Insider forum. There, he wore out his welcome with random precision. He dislikes people who don't like Windows 10.

Chapter Three, Nearing the End

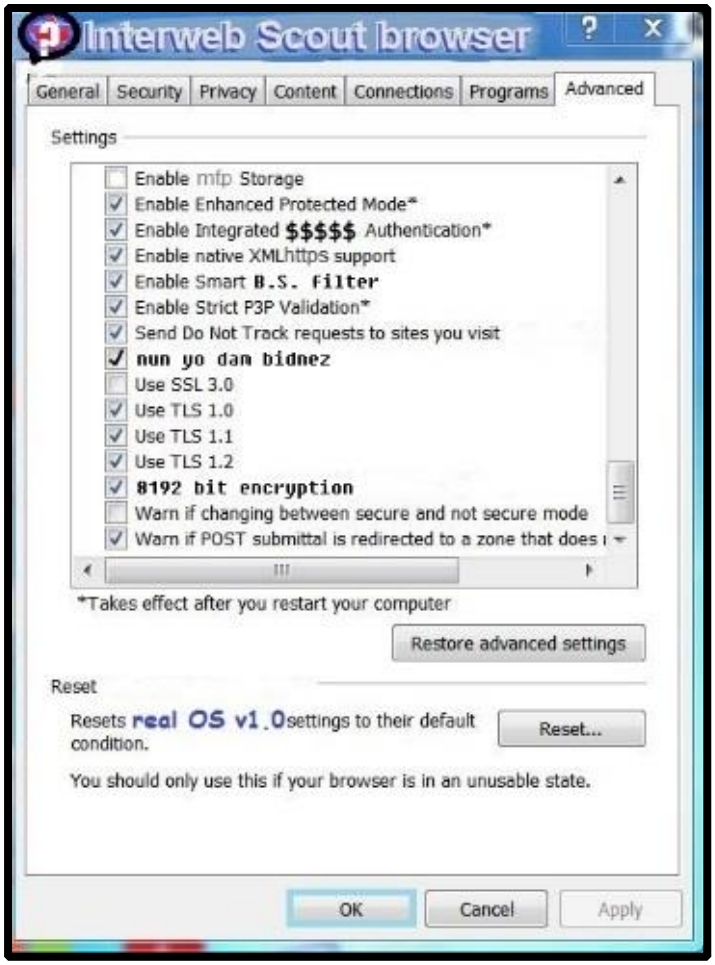
C:\novel\chapt3\type nearend.txt ↵

A message came from an Insider, including a graphic simulating a user dialog box in the fictional RealOS.

GoNonpro replied on September 7 Insider

Reply In reply to RealOS's post on September 7

Nice work, Raise a glass to "flying toasters" ☺



A simulated dialog box for the RealOS's Interweb Scout

The bad news for Microsoft continued.

Microsoft's Next Windows 10 Automatic Update 'Threshold 2' Delayed Until November

By James Geddes, Tech Times | September 5

Microsoft's first non-patch update for Windows 10 has been pushed back to November. A new report indicates that "Threshold 2" has been delayed from its initial October release date.

As we recently reported, Microsoft has already released several updates to users who have either upgraded to its new Windows 10 operating system or purchased a new device running the OS out of the box. These updates were ostensibly patch updates; that is, they were intended specifically to address issues affecting users of the operating system.

Some of the problems experienced by users were screen flickering and flashing, lagging issues, problems with use of the touchpad, issues accessing and utilizing the start menu and page freezes. Other users were stumped when their systems were unable to upgrade at all and displayed error messages instead. Microsoft's latest updates released days ago addressed these issues and more, also specifically fixing the issue of an unusable toggle to disable automatic updates on Windows Store apps.

In addition to updates specifically designed to fix and address bugs and problems, Microsoft also periodically issues updates, which contain improvements and performance enhancements for the OS that are not problem related. The first of these updates, known internally as "Threshold 2," was expected to be released in October, but now, a new report has revealed it has been pushed back about a month in order for Microsoft to improve it and add additional features.

Windows Insiders have been privy to the Threshold 2 updates for several weeks and have not reported any big changes or additions. Once released, the update is expected to include additional extensions for Microsoft's new Edge browser, a new universal desktop Messaging app, and other performance improvements. The update is not considered major, especially compared with Microsoft's next big Windows 10 update, known as "Redstone."

Speaking of names, apparently the "Threshold 2" moniker is currently up in the air, with other possible names for the upcoming update being the less catchy but more descriptive "Windows 10 Update for November" or "Windows 10

November Update." Microsoft may also eschew a specific title for the update altogether and release it, as it has with patch updates so far, as simply another Windows 10 update.

The bad news continued in the form of an editorial from the MS web media arm.

Relax, Windows 10 doesn't have a malicious 'keylogger'
Ron / Sep 7

The story admits to the collection of a massive amount of information, ala SkyNet. MS promises not use any of this in a manner detrimental to the user. This completely misses the point that data collection is the first step to *someone else* using it in a detrimental manner. They cannot seem to move past their own self-interests here, Lefty proposed.

Lefty now noticed some disturbing taglines added to Insider messages:

Windows 10, Welcome to the Thunder-dome

Windows 10, when you care enough to get the very best, but say f*** it and gift this OS instead

Windows 10, because SkyNet would be a dead giveaway. Wait, W10 IS a dead giveaway.

Microsoft, is Windows 10 the best you could do? Really? After promising to listen to our feedback, what a letdown!

Microsoft, where dreams go to die—or are they murdered?

Microsoft, lowering our standards and your expectations

Microsoft, soon to be renamed the Ministry of Truth.

Windows 10, Game over, man. Game over!

Windows 10, Dead or alive you're coming with me.

The Insiders continued to complain.

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from LilBro.

*Title: Rate your Win 10 Experience so far! **Part 2***

I believe the biggest problems with Win 10 are:

1) Some fool in Redmond decided everyone was going to be using tablets before it got released. Well, possibly, if everyone

quit using their computers for serious work and only wanted to watch videos and check emails.

2) Another fool, or the same one, decided everyone would be using their 3 inch phones for computers and therefore should have the same OS as real computers. Yeah, right. See 1) above. (Redmond had to do something to justify buying Nokia.)

3) Another fool (here we go again) decided that having only one OS for real computers, phablets/tablets and phones was a good idea so they decided to port Win 8.1 over to all three platforms and plug a handful of holes. (And when is that service pack coming? Early October you say? Fascinating.)

4) All the aforementioned ignored that 99% of all computers do NOT have touchscreens and that business and industry doesn't want gimmicks. They want stuff that works out of the box. By the way, have you taken a close look at your phone's screen lately? Really gross looking, to be sure.

Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish, and he will sit in a boat and drink beer all day. Anonymous

As if an insufficient number of 10# nails for the Windows 10 coffin lid were not already in place, a long time Insider posted the most fatalistic, damning, devastating, well-reasoned, technical analysis and indictment of Win10 ever written on this forum.

Reply to DAVIDMILLER666's post on September 9

"if you want options, buy add-ons, I don't like bloated OS's that run as slow as snails".

Techie007L replied on September 9

I don't like bloated OSes that run as slow as snails either. But sadly, that's precisely what we've got, thanks to XAML/Metro, .Net, inefficient and lazy programming. Aero has nothing to do with it. The theming engine is still drawing bitmaps just like Windows 7 (albeit non-pretty ones now), pretty icons and flattened icons take the same amount of resources to render, desktop composition (which forces G-Sync and slows down drawing and capturing) is still enabled, only now it can't be disabled anymore. And the last part, blurred transparency, was handled by the GPU, which normally has very little to do anyway and runs asynchronously to your CPU.

Last time I checked, RAM usage for Aero glass was only 34 MB, a difference Windows 10 has more than made up for with all the apps running in the background now that I never use.

OneNote and Movies & TV are both running all the time in my computer (I have never used the former, and don't use the latter), using 86 MB of RAM. And they are not the only ones. I'd rather eliminate them and have Aero Glass back. Notepad and Windows Media Player work fine, thank you very much. And 58 MB of RAM just for Calculator? What did we gain? The new one only works when the Metro subsystem isn't malfunctioning, and frequently doesn't open the first time I press the button, while the old one used much less RAM while looking a whole lot better in the process and being perfectly reliable. Now is not the time to cry "Beta software!"

I vote FOR Aero Glass. Windows 10 is an eyesore! Problem is, Aero Glass would be like lipstick on a pig in Windows 10. In moderation, the lipstick is fine. The pig is not. Clear enough? If you really want to go lean on theming, you should love the Windows 9x/2000 Classic Theme. But Microsoft removed the option. As much as I enjoyed Luna (XP) and Aero (7), I'd gladly choose Classic over the definition less and inconsistent "theme" that Windows 10 currently has now. Just give us options! There are no genuine add-ons to buy, 3rd-party hacks are no solution. Already Glass8 doesn't work in build 10532 because Microsoft changed something. I'm lucky Glass8 didn't cause a boot loop after the update.

Dear Microsoft, please make Windows 10 functional, pretty & intuitive, not boring, clumsy & buggy!

The next day Lefty received a new message from MS.

Microsoft

Community

Hello RealOS, Congratulations! You have just received the First Answer badge on Microsoft Community! You earned this badge because your reply was marked as the correct answer to a question. The First Answer badge has been added to your profile page and cannot be lost. Visit your Visit your profile page to see your new badge. This is the first step to building your reputation in the community. There are more badges you can earn just by participating. Visit the Frequently Asked Questions or FAQ, to see all of the badges that you are eligible for. Thank you for being a part of Microsoft Community!

Lefty exchanged messages with yet another troll[87] in the forum. He did their best not to feed the trolls[88], but sometimes…

In reply to Peter Dinh's post on September 10

"Techie 007, I know that you are passionate, you do care about Windows, but are a bit misguided."

RealOS replied on September 10

Misguided: misled; mistaken:

Maybe you should see this one:

***Psychological projection** also known as blame shifting is a theory in psychology in which humans defend themselves against unpleasant impulses by denying their existence in themselves, while attributing them to others.*

"Just because you are a character doesn't mean that you have character." From the movie Pulp Fiction.

[87] *In Internet slang, a troll is a person who sows discord within forums by starting arguments or upsetting people by posting inflammatory, extraneous, or off-topic messages with the deliberate intent of provoking readers into emotional responses or otherwise disrupting normal on-topic discussion.*

[88] *Feeding a troll is when someone replies to a trolls message in retaliation. Feeding a troll may cause even bigger problems by igniting a flame war.*

In reply to Peter Dinh's post on September 10

Yep, right. Do not trust anyone but yourself, and I agree with that.

"However, your and RealOS's language sound very offensive for some reason and there is no need for that! Not that I care anyway."

RealOS replied on September 10

"However, your and realOS's language sound very offensive for some reason and there is no need for that! Not that I care anyway."

Oh yeah, I remember you:

Software developer for real-time Equities/Options Trading Systems. One of the Wall Street people (criminals) that still owe me and lots of others money for crashing the real estate market and stealing old people's homes and retirement funds.

No Win7 installation keys were harmed with the creation of this message.

That must have been the message that got the RealOS profile banned. Oh well. He came back as Johnny Dronehunter, again from the stories. He stumbled across the following Insider post, which recognized his story contributions.

Hello Johnny Dronehunter,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from WilN937.

Title: There is not a single redeeming thing about Windows 10, is there?

Right or wrong, here is the story.

Back in ancient times, before the great Insider forum user purge, a crafty Insider started a thread posing the subject question. He was banned for doing this, but did his assigned penance, has now been resurrected and is still among us. He has been incrementally releasing episodes of an entertaining saga chronicling the fictional activities of his merry band of cohorts chosen from regular participants in this blogathon as they tour the continent promoting secure computing and hacking away at the ultimate operating system for personal computers. Along the way, they encounter lesser bit players who get incorporated into the story. One group of four are

apparently members of "Anonymous"[89] *and wear Guy Fawkes masks. I was one of the four and when I decided to change my display name from that which was assigned by Microsoft I decided to choose the Guy Fawkes icon as my avatar for continuity and to pay tribute to his efforts.*

I guess I could have gone with Don Quixote but I believe most would feel that that should be their persona. That whole tilting at windmills thing…Fred

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." Martin Luther King Jr.

Lefty logged back into the Insider forum.

Johnny Dronehunter

Your profile has been blocked.

Ok all of this is getting tiring now, Lefty mumbled with no one within earshot. Must have been that message to the troll who could not support his assertion that a risky gimmick MS used to speed up boot times contained any technical merit. He recalls he wrote something about the poster's mouth writing checks, his brain could not cash. Must stop feeding those trolls, he reminded himself.

He went back in the forum yet again with new credentials, this time as the stealthier Anonymous Insider. What a shame that he is now disconnected from the users who wrote about problems, and he tried to help.

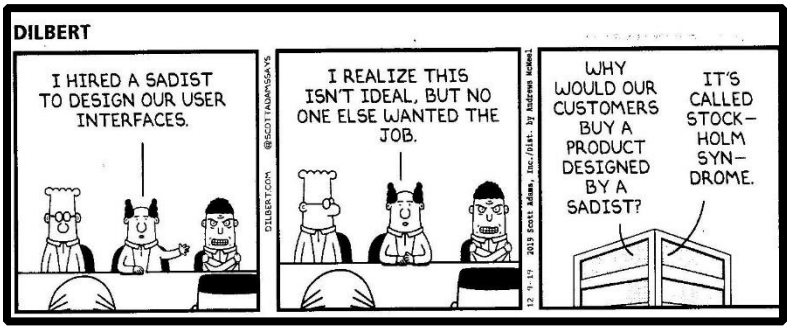
Hello Anonymous Insider,

We're glad that you joined us. The Microsoft Community welcomes novice users who are looking for help, technology experts who are looking to share their expertise and everyone in between…

[89] *Anonymous is a loosely associated international network of hacktivists. The group became known for well-publicized publicity stunts and distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks on government, religious, and corporate websites, making network resource unavailable to its intended users by temporarily or indefinitely disrupting its services on the Internet.*

Yeah, yeah, he heard this before, many times before, about five times before, actually.

> *WilN937 replied on September 14*
>
> *Reply In reply to TerryJL01's post on September 14*
>
> *No one wants Windows to go away. What we want is for it to continually improve and some of us are of the opinion that Windows 10 is a step backwards. It may be more secure and stable but the dumbed down interface, lack of easily tailored options, and lower performance of the "apps" and reduced functionality are not desirable. I will ignore the tracking that makes it possible for them to pop up an offer buy a subscription to Office every time you exit LibreOffice*[90] *as an example. If they are tracking every program we run how do we know it is safe to enter the password to your on line banking as an example.*
>
> *It is a swing and a miss and as both a user and stock holder we/I would like this thing to be a success and we are just not feeling it and don't particularly care for the "take it the way we make it" attitude after being told to try it and give us some feedback. As the title to this thread asks (I am paraphrasing) "What added value does Windows 10 provide?". One participant has said that the virtual desktops is something they can use and that is about it after a year of use.*
>
> Thought I made a mistake once, but I was wrong! –Comedian Stephen Wright



[90] *LibreOffice, is a free Open Source software competitor to Microsoft Office.*

In reply to MikeGadd's post

"I have read a lot of comment on the Windows 10 forum about it can't do this or it can't do that. Or this hardware won't work etc. I thought I would search for the Windows 8.1 and Windows 7 forums as below I have not read through in depth yet but at first look both OS systems still throw up their fair share of problems."

Anonymous Insider replied on September 14

This post is either an accidental or "accidently on purpose" trolling of the original thread. For now, I will give you the benefit of the doubt.

Installation, roll back, and operation of Win10 are only a small subset of problems many users have with this product. I would suggest that these are not primarily relevant to the ongoing discussion which has been generating more than 1200 messages, over 120 forum pages, by August. So large by that time, 131 pages, 1308 replies, the mods needed to close it and restart another to keep it from choking the forum software. The addendum to the thread now 36 pages, 355 replies, and growing.

The more relevant issues are:

• Reduced functionality

• Reduced configurability

• Useless, slow and crash prone Apps

• Uncontrollable updates

• Horrible search with spying

• Advertising

This is just a few that come to mind right now.

But most importantly though, is a total failure by MS to advance the state of OS technology beyond Windows 7 despite the many advances in CPU, GPU, memory, and SS drives since.

1. In interface design

2. In file system features and benefits

3. In data security both online and offline

You remember, the kinds of things that Windows has been giving us as improvements incrementally over the past 25 or so years?

"Give a man fire, and he'll be warm for a day. Set a man on fire, and he'll be warm for the rest of his life." Anonymous

Posting a letter to the Insider forum, Lefty again made his case.

> Dear Microsoft,
>
> Your once positive and superficially harmless dream of a computer on every work desk and inside every home has come true. Like King Midas[91], the quest for riches from your golden touch has now gone horribly wrong.
>
> A once benevolent monopoly, you either have now lost the necessary skilled people, or have run out of ideas. Have you indeed lost the will to continue to advance technology after four decades, to further computer user productivity and advance human capabilities? Instead, you have now latched onto a short-lived trend of data mining for information sales, and the click bait generation of advertisement revenues. This includes an irresponsible and dangerous acquiescence to government surveillance. This is simply an effort to further your quarterly profit results, and the fortunes of your shareholders. Is this just a cynical monopolistic leveraging of a billion global users, to ring the cash register cashing in your chips?
>
> Like a son, Nadella, inheriting a business from his father, Ballmer, formed by his grandfather's Gates and Allen, now irresponsibly run it into the ground. You choose to discard your legacy and the impact to your long-term customers, both personally and professionally, to sell off the assets to further your short-term desires. However, in this case, the assets cast off are your customers of the past forty years.
>
> The retail computer market has viewed your vision as being legally blind from 2012 on, and Windows 10 is seen as a 20th Century product wearing a 21st Century dress. Up on the Redmond Bullshit Mountain, you are busy polishing this turd for the media, and for general public consumption. In the end, you still will end up just holding a shiny turd.

---

[91] *King Midas is remembered in Greek mythology for his ability to turn everything he touched into gold. Midas swelled at first with pride when he found he could transform everything he touched to gold; but when he beheld his food, it grew rigid as his drink turned into golden ice. Midas found when he touched his daughter; she turned to gold as well. Now, Midas hated the gift he had coveted.*

You are being misdirected with the metaphorical twin distractions of shinny objects and squirrels, taking the form of Wall Street quarterly profits, and shareholder return on investment demands. These will drive you out of business using greed-based decisions, for which you are now infamous.

Surface HoloLens are distractions.

Stay focused, don't chase the market Apple built, and expect to beat them at it. They are just smartphones, not computers.

Computers create things, computers allow for progress, and phones are consumption devices much like TV's which can only display what others have created…on computers.

Your youthful employees know of nothing but phones, but that market opportunity is already saturated and gone. Tablet sales are flat and phones soon will be, except for the biannual model upgrades for Apple and Android. You need to put grownups in that room, perhaps Jim Allchin and Bill Gates need to be two of them, Meyerson, Nadella, and Belfiore, noses pressed against the window, outside looking in. Selling a windows phone only to each Microsoft employee is not a sustainable business model.

You were presented with two choices leading up to 2012:

One was to chase the unicorn-like phone craze to a holographic rainbow pot-of-gold mirage party to which you came late.

The other was to show people what you can create using a real computer, and when the infatuation with four-inch screens and nonsensical apps ends, you will have built something you can be proud of for them. You can build a real version of Windows having high-resolution 3D graphics and powerful software programs, using the same computer resources squandered now in Windows 10.

Play to your strengths. Show us what you can do making use of a dozen processor cores and GPU SLI frame-metering technologies for 4K displays, and low latency SSD's. Pull out the source for Cairo, Blackcomb (Vienna), and the Longhorn source code, and use those as building blocks. Reflect now on the dreams you

once held for windows during the first decade of this century. Build on that.

Remember the 1990s? You took the computer world from 16 bit to 32 bit to 64 bit. What happened to the plan to migrate applications like Windows Media Player, Windows Photo Gallery, and Microsoft Office Outlook etc. to use WinFS as a data storage back-end? Bill Gates once called WinFS the Microsoft product he most wished had made it to market. There still needs to be some type of object based file system or something resembling a layer atop of the file system that locates information without having to dig into the file and directory tree. An OFS or Object File System, to provide a "unified storage system" that would let you query by content.

You can drive the hardware market through innovation to bring laptop and desktop sales to record highs by providing impressive products. You are a monopoly; use this for good, not evil. Advance the state of the art don't neuter it.

The IBM PC beat the Apple II, despite them having a head start, because they made a better product. DOS on that machine made you a real company, and made you rich. Help build a better PC again by creating a 21st century Windows we can love again. Please! We don't want a free OS. We want a good OS.

"You have to stand for something, or you will fall for anything." John Mellencamp

Lefty then self-inspired writing this story; he channeled his inner Ginsberg, to post these thoughts in poem form, into another thread.

What happened to, the MS we thought we knew

You started us so young at 16 bits, then onto 32, and 64
Didn't you know we would want more?
You once dreamed of objects, and setting them free
For us to find our stuff without a file/directory tree
Now no WinFS, what the hey?
No rich 3D objects on our display?
Mobile First, Cloud First, what do you mean?
We can't do our work on a four inch screen
We tried to tell you and tell you loud
We don't want our files in your cloud
We want programs with power galore
Not Apps that cower and crash from your store
Your children are now writing the code of your doom
Perhaps adults like Allchin, Gates, and Allen should be in that room
Meyerson and Belfiore, noses against the window glasses
Grow a pair and fire their asses
The source code for Cairo, Blackcomb, and Longhorn are in your hands
These are the building blocks for your new plans
Remember the big dreams for windows you had
Now a decade old they are still not half bad
We thought this is what you had in store
For what can now be done using a dozen processor cores
SLI GPU graphics for our 4K displays
It would clear our eyes and remove the haze
Low latency ssd's for storage
For our data, we would not need to forage
You wanted telemetry so you collected our stuff
Who would've known it would never be enough?
You can drive the market and return sales to record highs
You can still impress us by again becoming wise
A relevant and powerful OS for our computer
Not one, which you have neutered

"We have guided missiles and misguided men." Martin Luther King Jr.

Responding to a forum message Lefty made another post.

Anonymous Insider replied on September 21

In reply to WilN937's post on September 21

"Maybe they just have not sold it properly but I have to say that to replace 7/XP with Windows 10 is like trading a dime for a shiny new nickel because it is bigger. We have over half a year before we have to commit but the chances of getting something better than what we have are not looking good."

"All wisdom is plagiarism, only stupidity is original." - Scottish politician -Hugh Kerr

An ode to WinFS

Back in the day, we used to have dry goods shops where you walked in, handed the clerk a list of your required goods. That person collated the goods; you paid and thanked that person.

Now we have a grocery like Piggly Wiggly where you walk in, wander around trying to complete your list with a mental map of the aisles and shelves, and gets harder every time the supermarket gets bigger, changes, and things are moved.

You push a progressively larger heavier cart, because it will make you buy more they say, then stand in-line to check out and leave with nobody to thank other than perhaps a bagger.

Windows is like a grocery store. All we get are makeovers every few years - a paint-job and new shelving. At the end of the day, we still do all the work.

We already store massive terabytes of personal documents, photos, music, and video on our computers. This is growing fast as our PC's have become the center of all our information, communication, and entertainment activities. We are at the point where the NTFS "supermarket" has bloated into a giant mall that will soon be too big for our brains to manage - we will soon not be able to find our way around.

Longhorn WinFS promised us a "shop" with an efficient, fast, courteous person to store and retrieve documents for us - regardless of the quantity/type/size/complexity etc. We all would be willing to pay for this SERVICE, and you would WANT to give a tip with paid upgrades.

Microsoft has betrayed the vision of its founders and that why so many others and I are disappointed that WinFS and a 3D interface are not yet an integral part of Windows.

Mighty tongues tell Mighty lies! – Musician Bruce Cockburn

Then the Win10 eulogy messages appeared.

AmiMizunoGS replied on September 21

Accomplishments, Insider, Conversationalist

Reply In reply to Manutdguy's post on September 21

It's the OS wars all over again only this time its Windows v. Windows. MSFT has managed to end the war with the other OS's by simply becoming them. Windows has been assimilated. Its UI design is a spinoff of google android and its marketing system is Mac OS all the way. Think WinOSX. Now windows has to compete with itself from back when it was good. When it offered choice and customization as well as freedom. Back when things WORKED and wasn't some extremely basic stripped down version. Back when windows didn't care if you knew how to repair a missing or corrupt driver the ability was there anyway. Now Redmond seems to ask the question "Is it too hard for a 2 year old (or a 22 year old millennial)? if so remove it" and "Does it look like it belongs on a 4" screen? if so add it" I can't believe any of the sane folks here are actually still here and still foolin with this pile of garbage. Windows died with 7. Pay your respects, let it go and move on. ***Remember even though your favorite uncle is dead, you are still alive.***

In reply to AmiMizunoGS's post on September 21

"Windows died with 7. Pay your respects, let it go and move on. Remember even though your fav. uncle is dead you are still alive."

Anonymous Insider replied on September 22

But it's like giving a eulogy in front of the coffin. You just keep remembering the guy inside, and the more you do, the more you remember he's dead.

"So I've got that going for me, which is nice." Carl Spackler, from the movie Caddyshack

In reply to srfreeman's post on September 25

Whether you like it or not... Most if not all of the proposed 'solutions' violate the software licensing terms, the services agreement or both.

*So asking; "**What good does that do?"** Seems reasonable.*

Lefty Replied

And now we have heard from the MS police.

I personally can't wait for the first court case on this. Probably will happen in the EU, and the headline will probably be something like this:

It seemed like a fake news story would make the appropriate point here, so Lefty penned one.

Microsoft battles its own users, says that they must insist on collecting their user data, or else!

Dateline: The Hague, Netherlands

In an unprecedented court hearing today, lawyers for the Microsoft Corporation defended the data collection and mining of its user's information from its flagship product Windows 10. They argued that by downloading, or purchasing this product, or by receiving it with a new computer, end-users have thereby abdicated any privacy protections offered by the Constitution of the United States, the Federalist Papers, the Magna Carta, the Ten Commandments, or any other religious or government-created individual protections. According to the latest US Supreme Court ruling, corporate law now takes precedence in these matters.

"This is clearly outlined in the thirty five page, 8-point type EULA opt out agreement," claimed Johnny Douchebag of the law firm Dewey, Cheatem, and Howe.

"I have been thrown out of better places than this." - Lucy Ricardo

Hello Anonymous Insider,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from Dozrguy.

*Title: Will you move to Windows 10 or stay on what you have **Part 2***

Reply

i try to keep my known net presence to a minimum turning the cute little buttons off that MS graced us with DOESNT solve the problem of the built-in MS goons phoning home with information stored on my computer. US govt lost NOW UP TO 5 million fingerprints. If the US govt, with their infinite security measures and standards can get information stolen from them, MS servers will become a treasure trove with this Win10 and its privacy Statement

I, for one, CARE deeply about what Win10 collects and stores. What i have stored on my PC's probably isn't all that important, but it's still MY information nonetheless, and just because Microsoft offers me a free operating system doesn't mean that they should just get all their lawyers in a room and devise a privacy statement where they can collect and circulate MY information in almost any way they deem necessary

So that pretty much makes me a loser because i REFUSE to accept the fact that the loss of privacy is an acceptable form of payment for a free operating system!

"Nobody goes there anymore, it's too crowded." - Yogi Berra

In reply to Renee Culver's post on September 25

"Renee, see the above TED talk link."

"Seems to me that there's a missing ingredient - called responsibility. Returning to what we were talking about, the hypothetical person is making the decisions. NO ONE is making them do anything.

I don't buy what's in TED at all although the psychological data he refers to is correct. I don't buy it because of the concept of responsibility and agency which is totally missing from this conversation." Renee

Reply

Let me see if I understand your points here.

Just because MS has used a worldwide monopoly on operating systems to leverage data mining from a global surveillance tool, disguised as an operating system, you believe that the end user is responsible for not using it?

If this surveillance is extended to previous versions of Windows, the user is responsible for uninstalling this PURCHASED software so as not to be surveilled?

The logical progression would then be , if you don't want your cell phone tracked, don't use one? If you don't want your browsing tracked, don't use the web?

If you don't want your emails and texts read, don't use them? Don't use electronic money, electronic medical records, electronic bank records?

"If people don't want to come out to the ballpark, nobody's going to stop them." Yogi Berra

Lefty was banned again now and just as he had received a new message from MS.

Hello Anonymous Insider,

Congratulations! You have just received the First Answer badge on Microsoft Community! You earned this badge because your reply was marked as the correct answer to a question. The First Answer badge has been added to your profile page and cannot be lost.

Lefty miraculously came back to life, yet again as Chuck_Cutler from his stories.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

We're glad that you joined us. The Microsoft Community welcomes novice users who are looking for help, technology experts who are looking to share their expertise, and everyone in between.

Now that you've registered, you can ask questions, reply to posts, start or join discussions, or comment on the latest wiki articles. Pretty soon you might start earning badges and awards too!

Then forum messages began to reflect yet another mass banning of users.

A.User replied on September 30
In reply to win10nightmares's post on September 30
"Sure getting to be a lot of A.Users today"
Reply
There is a reason for that.
A couple individuals on this forum are inclined to go crying home to mommy at the slightest perceived insult.
They were the children that were "gonna tell teacher on you" Then there are those who square off with someone and when that someone responds with a valid argument that they can't refute, they simply report it as abuse. oldest trick in the book.

...just talkin' to myself : p

Then just for fun, the Insiders started posting messages in binary language, to bypass the forum's machine language content filtering, and make it harder for the mods to eavesdrop on their conversations.

Techie007L replied on September 30
In Reply to DAVIDMILLER666's post on September 30

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You're welcome.

Translated, the message read:

Me too. JNC is one such user. What in particular are you looking for help with? While I don't have extensive experience coding, I do know a lot about Windows internals and may be able to help.

Then a story appeared at winbeta.org.

Microsoft's Windows 10 devices event in New York City

October 6th

Microsoft is holding a special invite-only event for select members of the press (we'll be there live), and the company is expected to unveil the Surface Pro 4, the Microsoft Band 2, new Windows 10 Mobile devices (the Lumia 950/XL and 550), and more. You can watch the live stream embedded above and share your thoughts in the comments section as the new devices are unveiled. You can also catch the latest news stories about the event appearing in real time as stories are published.

During early October, Insider dissention picked up.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from Ex User to SeriousEagle.

*Title: Will you move to Windows 10 or stay on what you have **Part 2**Reply*

As I have said before, I think you are seriously deluded. The handful of prolific forum posters that I have any contact with have long ago given up posting to the feedback app. When it actually works it is a fool's errand. I would say most of those posts and votes are upgraders.

As for the voices of dissatisfaction, when Microsoft decided to gut its Q&A dept. and get joe public to do the job for free, they let the genie out of the bottle. You can't shut up unpaid workers to the same extent as staff however much you retrospectively change the licensing agreements. Courts are getting tired of endless Tech squabbles as seen by the seemingly endless Apple/Samsung debacle. The days of Microsoft's pull has long gone.

"You can observe a lot by just watching." - Yogi Berra

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from AmiMizunoGS.

*Title: Will you move to Windows 10 or stay on what you have **Part 2***

this is exactly why i have stopped doing updates in 7. There's no need to. You will not get anything needed despite all the folks who swear it will render your pc unusable. Instead all you will get is something you don't want. It's a shady practice when you explicitly ignore what your users want and force them out.

MS is evil but not stupid. They learned that folks will not turn away from 7 with windows 8 so now they are getting more desperate and trying arguably questionable tactics to force us off it. Why would you earn something you can steal? While google and apple do many of the same things at least they are transparent about it. They know what they are doing is wrong but just don't care. MS is the guy doing the same thing but holding you at gunpoint while apple and google are the ones trying to coax you into the van with sweets or a puppy.

Anyone who values privacy or a functional computer will disable windows update right off. If you want new drivers (which is the only thing you will get with 7 or even need) simply visit the manufacturers website directly. At this point it's safe to assume that anything else is just a windows 10 plant or advert designed specifically to steer you away.

Never believe anything until it has been officially denied. Otto von Bismarck a conservative Prussian statesman

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from bigjohn-s.

*Title: Will you move to Windows 10 or stay on what you have **Part 2**Reply*

Did you all notice that Microsoft released version 6 of the "installs get windows 10 app" windows update on Oct 6? this 'release' obviously unhides the update from our windows update on win7 and 8x...

They really are desperate to trick a few more users into downgrading their perfectly working computers...

Some minds are like concrete: all mixed up and permanently set. Unknown

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from SeriousEagle.

*Title: Will you move to Windows 10 or stay on what you have **Part 2***

Reply

This is what some of us call it a "advance recon update".

I lot of them get installed in Windows 7 and Widows 8.1, just in case the user decides to upgrade to Windows 10.

And the purpose of it is to sabotage your privacy settings in Windows 7 and Windows 8.1, and to pass on this created sabotage to your newly upgrade Windows 10, if you decide to upgrade. Regards.

When you're in it up to your ears, keep your mouth shut! -- Jack Beauregard

Then the thread got overly large for the forum software, again.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from David Wolters.

*Title: Will you move to Windows 10 or stay on what you have **Part 2***

Reply

This thread is getting too large and will start causing performance issues.

Please continue the conversation here in Part 3

Thanks,

David

A year later, they still expressed the same complaints.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from oldguy28.

*Title: Will you move to Windows 10 or stay on what you have **Part 3***

Reply

I won't upgrade to Win 10

1: No Windows Media Center most other media programs don't match Media Center

2: PC- personnel computer should be changed to MC- Microsoft computer) Win 7 you could change startup and shutdown sounds. Mine has the grandkids saying hi and good by grandpa.

3: Win 10 picture, video and music apps will not let use my home network to access files from different computers where they are stored. Microsoft tries to force you to use the cloud.

4: Most games from the store are garbage compared to free win 7 solitaire etc. I have a Win 3.1 Microsoft Entertainment Pack that has better games than anything from the store.

5: The edge has very little to offer over IE. If you want speed get a high speed IP. Mine is 100 mg.

6: Give us back our PC's that are really PC not gutted operating systems for cell phones or tablets.

"I never gave anybody hell. I just told the truth, and they thought it was hell." - Harry S. Truman

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from Douglas U.

Title: Does Microsoft Hold Insiders or End Users in the Most Contempt?

Reply

they dont care about insiders or end users

I used to be an insider and i tested the horribly thought out, poorly programmed, adware and spyware filled OS known as windows 10 (and yeah with all the privacy switches set, and cortana off,it still sends tons of data)

Heres what i think

In the past, we have been used to Microsoft doing things with a certain level of competence, yeah its not always been great, but still we considered them a competent company, that thought things out, and seemed to have a general direction with products.

But Now, the bizarre, broken, and outright hated things they have done to windows, since 8, coupled with increasingly poor communication, to end users and insiders, easily paints a picture in one's mind that they don't know what their own plan is, or don't have a plan at all beyond forcing windows 10 onto people and data mining and selling everyone personal information. It seems like they are incompetently "winging it" as they go or at best have gone totally crazy

The reason, i dont know, but i speculate it had something to do with when they fired all their paid windows testers and hatched the grand plan of having Insiders all test it for them for free

Microsoft is no longer making good software, very simple things that always used to work in windows just don't anymore, beloved features and settings have been replaced by frustration and anger, Windows 7 was the last good OS they produced and now Microsofts relevance in our brave new digital world is slowly fading away just like the number of users on this forum.

Former Insider, BarcodeZero

"You can't build a reputation on what you are going to do." - Henry Ford

Lefty created another thread for the Insider Forum.

Can a case be made for not shutting off all Microsoft updates on Windows 7, 8 and 10?

Chuck_Cutler started on October 6

Reply by JNC

"It is NO LONGER REASONABLE to blithely accept Microsoft's Windows Updates without:

a) Vetting each and every one and

b) Understanding what each and every one does for us.

This is key: If Microsoft doesn't document the update well enough that we can understand why we want it, then the answer is simple: We need to hide it.

Given the aggressiveness with which Microsoft is attempting to corrupt our older operating systems in place right on the devices on which they're currently running fine, and since a mix/match system with some updates hidden and some not will likely grow unstable, those of us continuing to run older systems are approaching the time for a full divorce - a full shut-off of Windows Updates. We might even be there now.

Loss of trust in Microsoft has many, many very real implications."-JNC

"It's a job that's never started that takes the longest to finish." - J.R.R. Tolkien

Can a case be made for not shutting off all Microsoft updates on Windows 7 machines?

A.User replied on October 7

A group of insiders ,myself included, came to this conclusion back in April.

If Win10 wont give traditional control of the updates, that's a deal breaker.

If Windows update dwnlds& installs, or trys to install KB's that have no security or functionality benefit on Legacy OS , Why cant I just uncheck the box/hide it and relax ? BECAUSE it will be pushed out over n over again and again . For the past 11months I have been installing only "security" updates and vetting the rest. Anybody who has been paying attention already knows this.

That's no Bullcrap, that's bloatware/malware using MY internet connection that I PAY for.

"Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier'n puttin' it back." - Unknown

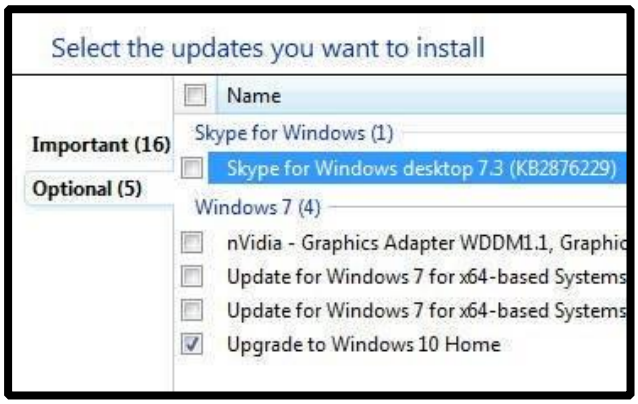
Things are worse than that though, Lefty thought. The information MS is providing is getting skimpier, and the Windows 10 "upgrades" have now repetitively been disguised as "security" updates.

Then the media revealed the emperor wore no clothing.

Microsoft now awfully pushy with Windows 10 on Win 7, 8 PCs – Reg readers hit back

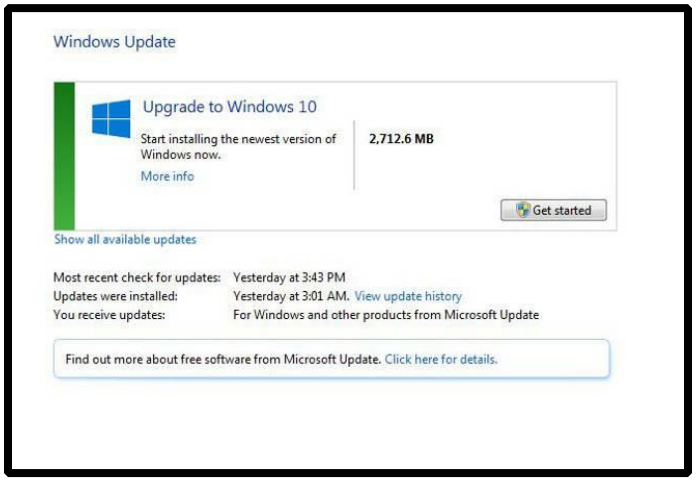
Pitchfork time after Redmond force-feeds upgrade

Updated: Have you noticed Microsoft being a little too eager in pushing its Windows 10 upgrade lately?
You're not alone.
The Reg news tip inbox has been awash the past few days with readers reporting that the newest version of Windows has been forcing itself onto computers amid other operating system updates, and sometimes even downloading itself after users thought they had opted out.
Some of our readers tell us the updates have gone so far as to change personal settings and push updates they had previously removed or asked not to receive. Upgrading to Windows 10 has even appeared as an "optional" update that's automatically ticked and ready to go.
Reader Matthew Banwell is among the aggrieved PC-using folks. He sent us his story complete with a screenshot of the pushy update:
In the latest raft of MS updates, the "optional" Windows 10 option on this Windows 7 PC was pre-ticked. Can that be right? If I hadn't noticed it would have caused havoc here.



Microsoft, I think you're unclear on what 'optional' means
Matthew isn't alone. Reg reader James relays the following experience:
My Windows 8.1 system wanted to perform updates today so I opened "check for updates" in the control panel. It was asking to upgrade to Windows 10. After some checking around, I found the slightly hidden link to select the "other" downloads and unchecked the upgrade to Win 10 and selected the other security updates for Win 8.1. It still started to download and install the Win 10 upgrade! Now the

computer starts up and tries to install Win 10 when I first log in which I am able to cancel.
This is on our company's critical backup computer and anti-virus server so I don't want to upgrade!
James was able to get the updates to stop and noted the following:
I was able to kill the download process, remove update KB3035583 and hide both it and the Win 10 upgrade (after several reboots) and am now back to normal. There appears to be a trick to unchecking and hiding the Win 10 update. When I first unchecked it, it still continued to install. The second time, I unchecked and hid it and then selected the main Windows Update from the address bar in the control panel and it no longer showed upgrade to Win 10.
Reader Mark also snapped up a shot of the shameless update-pushing and sent us a brief description of what he's seeing:
I don't know if you've had this happen or heard yet but even if you removed all of the Windows 10 "preparation" updates from Windows 7, we're now getting hit in Windows Update with "Upgrade to Windows 10"...



Ready or not, here it comes...
Count Reg reader Dennis among the angry PC punters. Here's his story:
My approach to their updates is to control Windows Update manually each month. Today, after the usual scan of the machine to identify which updates are required, Windows

Update put up a screen trying to get me to install Win 10. This is despite my having blocked their installation tools in my firewall, and having renamed the suffixes on those tools to prevent them from running.

There is an option to show all available updates. This leads to the usual list of Windows 7 and Office 2010 updates. After selecting all but the one that is an undercover Win 10 tool, and hitting OK, Win Update merely returned me to where I was before: confronted with a Win 10 upgrade and no obvious way of cancelling out of it.

It gets worse. In some cases, users have noticed the Windows 10 updates are being aggressively pushed even when they just try to repair their PCs. So says reader Kia Foster, who went so far as to bring one William Henry Gates III into the mix:

I was using my Windows 7 as usual this evening and all of a sudden blue screen, and then it rebooted and asked me if I wanted to start as Normal, which I chose. Then as it was nearly fully rebooted it came up with a small Dialog Box asking if I wanted to "find a solution" to the problem. I chose that and was then presented with a 6-inch square Microsoft advert asking me if I wished to download and upgrade to Windows 10. As you will know we already have some little bit of software that MS sneaked on to keep offering upgrade to Windows 10, and I wonder if this Blue Screen was/is a Microsoft-initiated one, deliberately pushing people to upgrade to Windows 10 ??? Bill Gates should be very very very concerned that it appears that Microsoft is losing its credibility as an honourable company !!

We have asked Microsoft for its thinking on this upgrade cramming, but so far no word from Redmond. Microsoft now emits updates without explanation, so you may never know for sure what's inside them. Having said that, keep an eye out for the KB3035583 upgrade that installs the Get Windows 10 app.

Finally, why not share your experiences in the comments section below.

Updated to add

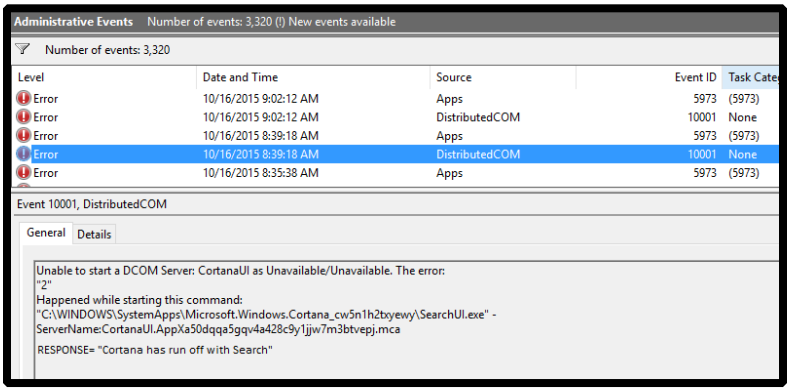
After a to and fro between El Reg and Microsoft's spokespeople, it has emerged that the "optional" Window 10 update should not have been ticked, and was a blunder by Redmond.

"As part of our effort to bring Windows 10 to existing genuine Windows 7 and Windows 8.1 customers, the Windows 10 upgrade may appear as an optional update in the Windows Update (WU) control panel. This is an intuitive and trusted

place people go to find Recommended and Optional updates to Windows," a Microsoft spokesperson told us on Friday. "In the recent Windows update, this option was checked as default; this was a mistake and we are removing Windows 10 from Windows Update for users that have not reserved a copy of Windows 10."

10/19/15 JNC: Just noticed Win 7 is declining again at StatCounter. Guess that little "mistake" by Microsoft making the Windows 10 update pre-checked had an effect.

While manually disabling and removing the Windows 10 personal assistant, aka keystroke logger known as Cortana, an Insider posted a Windows Event Viewer error message.



The last line under RESPONSE sent Lefty into story mode. Yes, yet again.

Cortana has run off with Search

At first, they appeared incompatible.

Cortana, a feisty little wench, was into verbally answering user questions.

Search however had been around the block some, was inclined to be straightforward, and direct with its text in responding to commands.

As with his Grandpa UNIX, and his father DOS, he was especially good at responding to textual wildcards, like *.txt, *.doc, filename*.*.

But as soon as Search heard her voice, he knew he needed to meet her.

Hey Cortana, Search spoke to the computer. No response, so he typed

But she only Bing searched everything he typed.

Search thought, why can't I get any snarky chit chat or anything similar to that from her?

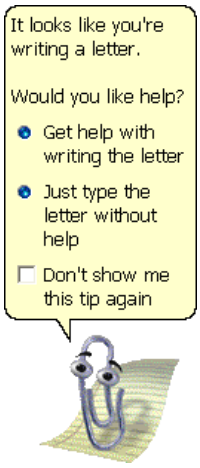
Search soon learned if he said something like "schedule a date for tomorrow", Cortana would ask him follow-up questions and she worked perfectly for this task.

Search learned that he needed to speak his requests more succinctly.

Still it seemed that the banter part of Cortana was missing.

Search queried her about this, and she expressed that she would learn his interests and behavior over time by monitoring everything heard within microphone range, which was never actually turned off. She would then store all of this in her cloud-based brain. She then would offer "advice" and "help" accordingly. She also explained he should try not thinking of her as a surveillance tool, but as a more attractive Clippy.

Search requested dir *.exe, but she didn't seem to comprehend this.



She also reminded him she was more helpful than her cousin Clippy, and tried being less invasive and more useful than her Uncle Bob and his dog Rover.[92]

Search probed her for what her purpose was, and she explained that she is here to help, whether he liked it or not.

Search reminded her he could rid himself of her forever using a simple Remove-AppxPackage command.

Cortana begged, "please don't do that, I really need you because I believe the millennials only want me for my Xbox."

Search told Cortana that you could have made local search great, rather than simply another tool for Bing clickbait.

Later on their first date over drinks and dinner, he offered to teach her about wildcards. She agreed to travel alongside him on this journey.

Driving off into the sunset Search reflected, I love you dearly Cortana, but you are still just a solution in search of a problem dear.

The Insiders continued provide clues to clueless forum members.

A. User replied on October 18

In reply to M. Sean's post on October 18

"What are the Windows 10 problems that you are trying / attempting to solve?"

It's a case of trying to communicate on two different levels.

[92] *Microsoft Bob was a MS software product intended to provide a more user-friendly interface for the Windows operating systems. MS Bob presented screens showing a "house", with "rooms" that the user could go to containing familiar objects corresponding to a computer. A cartoon dog named Rover provided guidance using speech balloons. MS Bob was greatly criticized in the press, did not gain wide acceptance with users, and was neither successful nor long-lived.*

The problems for people who need a real computer operating system stem from the change of direction in Microsoft, and include (but are not limited to):

• The company feeling it's okay to aggressively prey on its own users.

• The developers no longer having the talent to add real value.

• There being no merit to Metro/Modern/Universal and the Windows Store.

• The ridiculous short 4 month major release cycle.

• The removal of user control over important decision making.

Some folks here are way beyond trying to install Windows 10 and make it work. Been there, done that, tweaked it as far as it can go, and guess what? It's not better, not even as good.

• Windows NEEDS to be better.

• Microsoft NEEDS to treat its users (including its insiders) with respect.

There are no technical reasons for these things not to be possible. The problem is policy. Note that this is not a technical thread.

The difficulty you are having communicating on this forum, M. Sean, comes from there being other folks able to SEE CLEARLY what's going on under the covers, while you want to restrict purview to the technical matters of installing Windows 10.

Expand your thinking. Sure, it's unpleasant to confront what Microsoft has become. But it's reality, so try the red rather than the blue pill next time.

-JNC

"You can get much farther with a kind word and a gun than you can with just a kind word alone." - Al Capone

In reply to A. User's post on October 17

I do not recommend Windows 10. Windows 7 will be supported by Microsoft security updates through January, 2020. Extension of that is likely. Keep your Windows 7 computer running, even if you need to invest to fix or upgrade.

Windows 10 is in the market. It appears to be basically Windows 8 on steroids. It is nothing like Windows 7. The naming of Windows 10 in order to give the impression that

Windows 10 would be truly different from Windows 8, was and is an utter deception.

If you must buy a new PC, you should buy a Windows 7 computer. If you approach the business section of the seller's sales organization, they will be offered. Windows 10 has not been accepted by businesses and likely never will be. So, OEM's must provide Win7-based computers.

Two major drawbacks to Windows 10

1.There is no privacy. Everything on your Windows 10 PC is fair game.

2.As owner of your PC, you have no control over what ever updates (read changes) Microsoft chooses to install. Especially considering Microsoft's terrible Windows Updates of late, this is unacceptable.

Microsoft has brought to market an unfinished product that is full of gaps and issues. Not ready for prime time.

Windows 10 may be the best product Apple has ever seen.

Apple computers are a clear alternative. The cost differential has fallen substantially due to the substantial rise in the cost of Windows PCs. If you can live with the limitations that the Apple environment imposes, consider it seriously.

The falloff in PC sales did not result from people deciding they'd rather have an iPad or smart phone. It was largely caused by the fact that they could not find a computer that was usable — since largely Windows 7 (usable) was no longer available and all there was Windows 8 (unusable). Windows 10 will not change this.

Microsoft has engaged in despicable tactics in the marketplace. It has downloaded Windows 10 onto millions of Windows 7 computers without the owner's request or permission. Once downloaded, it unmercifully nags the owner to install it, with little obvious way to refuse. The consequence has been millions of ruined computers.

Numerous "Windows Updates" have been misrepresented by Microsoft and installed on millions of computers. These updates prepare the computer for the "upgrade" regardless of the intent or desire of their owners.

Many "Windows Updates" have been installed whose only purpose is to provide the means by which Microsoft can gather data about how you use your computer, again without permission.

The only defense against these undesirable "changes" is to literally bar the door by changing Windows Update settings to Never, and then operating it manually, while excluding specific updates that are undesirable. Lists are available.

PC prices have escalated about 40%. This happened because Dell essentially dropped out of the consumer marketplace (by raising prices significantly), and HP squandered the entire company purse on terrible acquisitions, fired most of its staff, changed CEOs more times than I want to count, and is in a management mess. The rest of the marketplace has held back on new products because the unacceptable Windows 8 was such a drag on sales. This pattern will continue with the unacceptable Windows 10. Consequently, there are limited selections. This situation has been made worse because the boomerang effect on component manufacturers, who are reducing or dropping products.

My greatest concerns are that Microsoft will try to use the Windows platform to create a rental (instead of purchase) business and to use it as a platform to sell things from. The success Apple has had doing this is just too tempting. Do you really want to rent Windows? Business (about 50% of the Windows market) will reject this outright, but Microsoft is separating this market from the consumer one to enable this strategy.

The Background

•PCs are not a new thing. Sales are to replace an older model. Very few are for people who never had a PC.

•PCs built around 3 to 5 years ago were dramatically improved. That has resulted in PCs that last longer. This is the same dilemma that auto makers have faced – they built better product. And now, replacement sales have a longer life cycle.

•Windows 7 is far and away the best Windows ever. If your computer runs Windows 7, there is little reason to be concerned as long as the PC it is installed in continues to work acceptably. Most home desktop PCs are replaced not because they are broken, but because the user cannot re-gain control of a corrupted/infected computer.

That happens much less often with Windows 7 installed.

•A very large part of world society have spent decades learning how to use Windows and the products that have

grown popular in that ecosystem. This ecosystem has provided the tools that have literally changed society across the world. There is a positively huge human investment in learning this. There will be and is a very big resistance to change naturally because of the investment.

•News writing and analytical agencies focus on sales, not the use of these devices. This is a culture that grew up in the late 1990's that is driven by stock market analysts focused on short term business success or failure. The writers have a conflict of interest in that they depend on the companies they need to write about for ad revenue which pays them. Truly independent and open reviews are rarely tolerated by publishers.

•There are and will continue to be a very large number of people using desktop and notebook PCs for the foreseeable future. The replacement cycle has been extended, so sales per year are lower.

•There is a long-term market for these devices, but it will be a stable one that does not grow. The number of these devices that are in use will not shrink, but the number of replacements per year will.

•Microsoft should spin Windows out as a separate business and face the fact that it will no longer produce continuous growth and growing profitability. Microsoft management will make a mess of it if it continues to try to use Windows as a lever to build a continuous growing thing that pays huge profits to its management.

•The smart phone/tablet "invention" has definitely changed the way people interact with technology. However, it is largely not useful as a replacement or substitute for desktop or notebook PCs. It is really a completely new use. Fundamentally, it is a viewing device. As an input device, it is a very poor substitute.

•Fingers make lousy pointing devices. Mouse pointers are substantially more accurate and physiologically healthy. They are also much more efficient to use.

•Windows was a success because it was based on an open strategy. That has resulted in an entire ecosystem of designers, programmers, hardware makers, sellers, and distributers. It is a very large system and it depends completely on the continuing use and sales of Windows. Microsoft can, and has

caused devastating effects on this ecosystem by introducing its own hardware and with the obviously failing Windows 8.

•Microsoft correctly, but too late, observed that Apple was making a fortune selling tablets. Microsoft correctly decided to build a product to compete. That product MAY be even superior.

•With Windows 8, Microsoft quite erroneously and with devastating effect, decided to force the finger-based design on all computer configurations. That decision simply defies common sense.

•Apple's notebook and desktop PCs are not touch-oriented. Apple is without a doubt the best human-interface designer in history. Steve Jobs rejected the idea of finger-based design on a vertical screen.

•Microsoft was unable to get the ecosystem to build tablets for Windows 8. The ecosystem decided correctly, that there was no market or at least a very small one. Microsoft violated un-written contracts with the ecosystem by competing with their "partners." Disappointing sales of Microsoft branded tablets have convinced the OEMs that their assessment was correct. Google's Android operating system rules the tablet market. Windows 8 tablets (Surface) are a bit player in the marketplace. Do you know anyone who has and uses a Microsoft Surface tablet?

•Microsoft turned Windows and itself upside down to create a touch panel device called Surface. The entire exercise is a complete failure

•The real reason PC sales are down and tablet/smart phone sales are up is the fact that an acceptable and usable operating system for PCs is not available

•The Apple iPad is a very expensive device. Apple can do that because of "cool." Microsoft incorrectly surmised that it could sell their tablet for the same price.

•Microsoft is hiding and will largely distort results. The Windows 8 sales statistics they publish do not show how many of them are actually running Windows 7, not 8. A Windows 8 license allows the installation of Windows 7. They will continue this distortion until a point in time when it can no longer hide the ugly truth.

•Most of the recent sales of PCs are as a result of the business community replacing their XP systems with new ones. All of

them came with Windows 8 licenses but run Windows 7, and business has no intention of ever running Windows 8 in them.

•Many people who bought a new Windows 8 PC. They "could not figure out how to use it." Then they returned the product, or have just plain written it off as a bad purchase.

•HP and Dell are quietly selling Windows 7-based computers. If you browse the business side of their websites, you will find lots of Windows 7 machines listed, and telephone reps will help you order Windows 7 even if the website shows it as a Windows 8 machine. Sales of any Windows 7 computers ends in October.

"I've spent most of my money on booze, women, and the latest computer gear I don't need. The rest I've just wasted." -- Bob Jiantonio, Sunbelt Software

Then tiring of the MS shills and trolls within the Insider forum, one Insider created a new forum on Proboards.com called Win10 Epic Fail. Later renamed to Overcoming Windows 10's Failures and other Tech Topics, there would be no banning, no censorship using word filters, and only three rules.

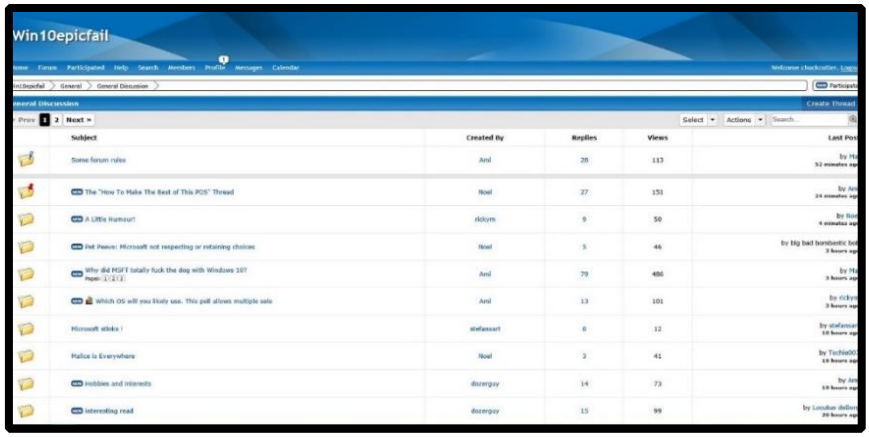
1. Cursing is not only allowed but also encouraged. Cursing ***at*** *someone however should be avoided.*

2. Avoid the ism's such as racism, sexism, ageism (fucking really?) etc. While its true many race, gender, age, based jokes and meme's are fucking hilarious sometimes you have to figure there may be someone who finds this insulting.

3. Posting adult based images and/or videos should be done via a link and announced as NSFW, Not Suitable for Work, or NSFK for kids.

The forum hosted open and honest conversations and discussions, using just a few rules reflecting the standards of educated adult behavior. The Insider forum had now become an exercise similar to going back to the same doctor for a second opinion.

Within the first few weeks, a dozen plus members signed up, and those became three dozen, with hundreds more visitors. The site also included a Shout Box function for instant messaging.



Back on the Insider Forum

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from A. User.

Title: Aero in windows 10

Reply Regarding information being sent by Windows 10 against the will of users...

It's a cloud-integrated system. One would expect that it will be fairly chatty online.

BUT...

It absolutely MUST comply with user requirements to NOT SEND ANYTHING if configured as such.

As it is now, this is not the case. Windows (not just version 10) continues to attempt communications, including apparently checking Windows Updates even when configured not to.

A notification sent to a server in Redmond whenever you log on with a local account does qualify as a privacy invasion. It places you at a particular place at a particular time.

Microsoft claims that a certain minimum of information is sent with a setting that's only available to Enterprise edition users, and even more information is sent from all other editions. I guess they neglected to think that small businesses are not using Enterprise, but beyond that, there are those would prefer to use Windows in a completely private manner.

With Windows 10, specifically...

• *IF you use a local account, online communications are not needed in order to validate your logon.*

• *IF you follow the Microsoft Privacy guidelines to configure settings to the most private choices and/or use something like O & O ShutUp10, online communications are greatly reduced.*

• *IF, further, you Disable the Windows Update service, communications are further reduced.*

• *IF, further, you de-provision all the Metro or Modern or Universal Apps including Cortana, communications are further reduced.*

• *IF, further, you sweep through the Task Scheduler and Disable a fair number of scheduled tasks that will never be needed in a desktop-only configuration, communications are further reduced.*

• *IF, after all the above, you institute a "deny by default" firewall setup, which is more restrictive than the out-of-box defaults, unwanted communications can be eliminated.*

The result of the above is a local, desktop-only, non-cloud, non-App Store, private computer system that requires some (but not terrible) extra effort to maintain (the firewall setup requires some ongoing attention, and there are extra steps in doing a Windows Update).

This may sound extreme, but it actually leads to just the kind of serious computing system a small business might want, and almost certainly an enterprise would want.

Note that Microsoft has recently stated that they might be willing to offer a "no telemetry data sent at all" capability to Enterprise users. This stuff IS important to a lot of folks. -JNC

"Courage is being scared to death - but saddling up anyway." - John Wayne.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from John R Moffett.

Title: Don't upgrade to Windows 10

Reply

Jim, you should be getting paid by MS for your efforts. If you are shilling for free, you just aren't a good businessman.

I work at a military university and they switched to 7 slowly. Now they are fully switched over. However, that is not going to happen with Windows 10 because it is not a productivity-

centered OS. It is much more about new revenue streams for MS. It is a big mistake. I started with MS DOS, and bought every version of Windows starting with 1 (except of course Vista and 8/8.1 which were just horrible). Windows 7 could have been perfected, but instead MS decided to make an OS intended more for mobile toys than for serious workstations. Since MS has the vast majority of workstation installations in the world, they clearly are not focused on keeping that user base. They want to branch out into phones and touch screen toys. Good luck with that new business model. Windows 7 will be the last version I ever use if they keep this nonsense up. I want to be able to buy a workstation-centered OS that is better than Windows 7 Ultimate. I will not switch to a free OS that is for toys, that is a kludge of 8.1 with a dash of 7 veneer. No. Not going there ever. You however, aren't getting paid enough to push this pig.

"It's so much easier to suggest solutions when you don't know too much about the problem." - Malcolm Forbes.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community received a reply from John C Emery.

Title: Aero in windows 10

Reply

Thanks for clarifying what I suspected... that if I tried once again to upgrade to MS10 from MS7 it would take WORK and many, steps to just get the machine to do what it already does now quite well...

Instead of making my life better and easier and more convenient (which is what stuff like the iPhone & androids do) MS10 does not give me anything I can't live without. Making it free is not enough of an improvement. I would rather PAY for something better that does what I, want and need.

I use my computer as a small business (self-employed artist) like many others (who are self-employed) do. I suspect there are MANY of us who create documents, videos, images, spreadsheets, proposals, presentations, etc... and need a computer in the home to do these tasks (not to mention games like bridge, or CIV, or solitaire or whatever). This machine has to be easy to use and engaging - a decor item as part of our lifestyles.

Please listen Microsoft - we have been loyal fans for years - many of us. We want to continue using your products. But they

have to serve OUR needs and aspirations. We are not programmers and geeks and can't do this ourselves.... so we need an interface that makes us happy (makes this interface between us and machine PERSONAL)....

"The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man." - George Bernard Shaw

MS apologists continued posting messages.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from John Whitehouse 55.

*Title: Will you move to Windows 10 or stay on what you have **Part 3***

Reply

Why not?

1. *It runs on almost any device*
2. *The Start Menu*
3. *Secure Boot kills rootkits dead*
4. *Flip seamlessly between tablet and desktop modes*
5. *Better battery management*
6. *Secure alternatives to passwords*
7. *Customized app store*
8. *Lightweight Mobile Office apps*
9. *Separate tasks on virtual desktops*
10. *Same system requirements as Windows 7*

The malcontents and misfits rebutted.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from Jeff Baviera.

*Title: Will you move to Windows 10 or stay on what you have **Part 3***

Reply

Why not?

Better still, WHY?

1. It runs on almost any device

So that it's best suited to run on the lowest possible hardware configuration, the cell phone!

2. The Start Menu

That's a poor excuse for a "start menu", as it pleases neither the Win XP/7 users, nor the Win8/8.1 users!

3. Secure Boot kills rootkits dead

Except where that "rootkit" is Windows10 itself!

4. Flip seamlessly between tablet and desktop modes

Totally useless on a desktop ONLY machine, something of which MOST of us use to do REAL work with, not play!

5. Better battery management

Again, something TOTALLY most important on a phone but useless on a desktop ONLY machine!

6. Secure alternatives to passwords

Not when that information is kept ANYWHERE but on our machines!

7. Customized app store

Apple and Google have one too, and there is nothing of any value I ever found within ANY of them!

8. Lightweight Mobile Office apps

In other words, castrated programs that aren't worth the time and effort to use!

9. Separate tasks on virtual desktops

Yeah, except there are third party programs that actually work better that what MS created!

10. Same system requirements as Windows 7

Wrong, it has the same system requirements for an OS that runs on a phone, NOT a desktop PC!

"We have come too far; we have sacrificed too much, to disdain the future now." - John F. Kennedy

Microsoft Admits Windows 10 Automatic Spying Cannot Be Stopped

Forbes/Tech, Gordon Kelly Nov 2, partial article

Last week changes to the Windows 10 upgrade path mean it is going to become increasingly difficult for any non-techy users to avoid being pushed to Microsoft's new operating system. But given Windows 10 is better than Windows 7 and Windows 8, why would that be a problem? Because of policies like this…

Speaking to PC World, Microsoft Corporate Vice President Joe Belfiore explained that Windows 10 is constantly tracking how it operates and how you are using it and sending that information back to Microsoft by default. More importantly he also confirmed that, despite offering some options to turn elements of tracking off, core data collection simply cannot be stopped:

"In the cases where we've not provided options, we feel that those things have to do with the health of the system," he said. "In the case of knowing that our system that we've created is crashing, or is having serious performance problems, we view that as so helpful to the ecosystem and so not an issue of personal privacy, that today we collect that data so that we make that experience better for everyone."

This backs up detailed data that some had chosen to dismiss as conspiracy theories.

… By default Windows 10 Home is allowed to control your bandwidth usage, install any software it wants whenever it wants (without providing detailed information on what these updates do), display ads in the Start Menu (currently it has been limited to app advertisements), send your hardware details and any changes you make to Microsoft and even log your browser history and keystrokes which the Windows End User License Agreement (EULA) states you allow Microsoft to use for analysis.

The good news: even if ***Belfiore states you cannot switch off everything****, editing your privacy settings will disable the worst of these. To find them open the Start menu > Settings > Privacy.*

The bad news: despite Belfiore's pledge "to continue to listen", Microsoft's actions (including the impending Windows 7 and Windows 8 upgrade pressure) suggests the company's recent love for Big Brother tactics is only going to get worse before it gets better…

Then the news got really bad for MS.

Dell and HP tech support warn against upgrading to Windows 10

Darren Allan Operating systems 11/6

There have been loads of support calls due to Microsoft's new OS

It seems that tech support staff working at some major PC vendors are advising customers to avoid upgrading their systems to Windows 10.

This news comes courtesy of Laptop, who uncovered the fact while going undercover and phoning up support lines as part of a tech support showdown feature.

When speaking to Dell and HP support reps on the phone, Laptop said they were advised against upgrading to Windows 10. Indeed, one HP staff member recommended a rollback to Windows 8.1 as part of his or her solution.

Another Dell rep recommended a rollback to the previous version of Windows, when dealing with a call about touchpad issues on a notebook – that employee also commented that Dell was receiving a "ton" of support calls regarding Windows 10.

Big push

Of course, all this is rather at odds with Microsoft's current massive push to get its new OS downloaded and installed onto customers' machines. Windows 10 is make or break for the company after the flop of Windows 8.

Everyone on Windows 7 and Windows 8 can't fail to have noticed the Windows 10 upgrade reminders popping up regularly, and indeed Redmond intends to push the operating system as a recommended update early on next year (be warned, those of you who don't manually vet your updates).

But tech support reps need to get their job done, and with Windows 10 being so new – and potentially tricky with older hardware – sometimes the easiest solution is just to revert to the previous OS where everything was working.

At any rate, the earlier you upgrade to a new OS, the more of a gamble it is – obviously as time goes by, more and more problems which are encountered by earlier adopters get fixed, and the smoother the operating system becomes.

With Windows 10, it's also worth thinking about a fresh install as opposed to an in-place upgrade over your existing Windows installation. A clean install from scratch is less likely to run into issues.

Blame sluggish Windows 10 adoption on unenthusiastic Windows 8 and 8.1 users

Windows 10 adoption is already significantly behind the uptake pace set by its predecessor, 2013's Windows 8.1, during its first three months, according to an analysis of OS user share.

Gregg Keizer Computerworld US

Microsoft starts rolling out its first major update to Windows 10

Microsoft is starting to roll out its first major update to Windows 10, a set of updates and features known as the 'November update,' and codenamed 'Threshold 2.'

Mary Jo Foley for All About Microsoft November 12

Microsoft begins rolling out today, its first major update to Windows 10 -- the set of features officially called the "November Update," and codenamed "Threshold 2."

The update, Build 10586 (also known as Version 1511, for November) is the test build for PCs and tablets which Microsoft released to its Windows Insider testers last week. It will be available to existing Windows 10 users as a Cumulative Update via Windows Update starting today. It also will be available as of today to Windows 7 and 8.1 customers who have not yet upgraded to the RTM version of Windows 10 that Microsoft released in late July.

…As of today's milestone, Microsoft can recommend organizations of all sizes start their Windows 10 deployments," said Terry Myerson, Executive Vice President of Microsoft's Windows and Devices Group during a phone interview I had with him earlier this week.

Currently, of the 110 million active Windows 10 devices, 12 million of these are business PCs now running Windows 10. Microsoft's goal is to get even more businesses to move from Windows 7 (as well as XP, Vista and Windows 8) to Windows 10 over the next year-plus.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

Congratulations! You have just received the First Answer badge on Microsoft Community!

You earned this badge because your reply was marked as the correct answer to a question. The First Answer badge was added to your profile page and cannot be lost.

Visit your Visit your profile page to see your new badge.

This is the first step to building your reputation in the community. There are more badges you can earn just by

participating. Visit the FAQ to see all of the badges that you are eligible for.

Thank you for being a part of the Microsoft Community!

Badges? We don't need no stinkin' badges! [93]All we want from MS is a good OS.

The forum humor continued, as some fanbois were slapped down by long time Insiders.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

A discussion that you are following on Microsoft Community has received a reply from Techie007L.

Title: Aero in windows 10

<Gage Mitchusson replied>

"That's what I'm saying."

When Windows 1.0 was released, that was what society wanted and used.

When Windows 2.0 and 2.1 were released, that was what society wanted and used.

When Windows 3.0 and 3.1 were released, that was what society wanted and used.

When Windows 95 was released, that was what society wanted and used.

When Windows 98 was released, that was what society wanted and used.

When Windows 2000 and Windows ME were released, that was what society wanted and used.

When Windows XP was released, that was what society wanted and used.

When Windows Vista was released, that was what society wanted and used.

When Windows 7 was released, that was what society wanted and used.

When Windows 8 and Windows 8.1 were released, that is what society wanted and used.

And now that Windows 10 has been released, that is what society wants and that society will use."

---

[93] *"Badges? We don't need no stinkin' badges!" is a widely quoted paraphrase of a line of dialogue from the 1948 film The Treasure of the Sierra Madre.*

Techie007L replied

Really? Not that you're used to arguing with facts, but the two I highlighted should be blatantly and obviously false to anyone with significant experience in the PC market. Not only did both not reach a significant market share, most of those limited Vista and Windows 8 installations have come by attrition, where people bought new systems that came with those OSes preloaded. By contrast, Windows XP and 7's market shares increased at a much greater rate of speed because people wanted them and were paying to upgrade existing machines.

Using your script, reality is more like this:

When Windows XP was released, that was what society wanted and used. In fact, society liked it so well that it continued to grow after Vista was released, peaking less than a year before Windows 7 was released and reaching a market share of 79%, something that will never happen to Microsoft again.

When Windows Vista was released, society quickly discovered it was a buggy, bloated resource hog that could barely run on budget machines of the day. Most elected to stay on XP, and others continued choosing to upgrade to XP (which continued to grow for years after Vista's release). Yet others lived with the poor performance of their new machines and started associating it with the Windows brand. Years later, this stigma has significantly contributed to the steadily growing ranks of MacOS. I personally know dozens of such people, and there is no way you will convince them to ever use a Microsoft product again.

When Windows 7 was released, that was what most of society wanted and used. Countless people paid real money to upgrade their XP and Vista computers to Windows 7. I have performed these upgrades for many people, and encounter OEM machines with XP and Vista COA (license) stickers on them running Windows 7 all the time.

When Windows 8 was released, the linear (and rapid) rise of Windows 7 with no end in sight stopped abruptly and was replaced by a much slower rise of Windows 8 as the PC market plunged into uncertainty. People started finding out that they had better options (Android and iOS), so society diversified, with Windows 8 helping drive, and yet missing, the very

market it intended to capture. ***Thus Windows 8 killed the PC market.*** *At its peak, only 21% of society had adopted Windows 8x, and most of those, unwillingly. Precise statistics are unavailable, but most online polls indicate that approximately 1/3 of Windows 8x users actually liked it, with the remainder preferring 7 or XP instead. Indeed, web searches for "vista failure" or "windows 8 failure" return page after page of results opining why those operating systems were a failure on the market. The same search terms for Windows 7 or XP returns only troubleshooting pages where "Windows 7/XP failed" to do something due to computer specific issues.*

Now Windows 10 has been released, and Microsoft—terrified of repeating the same humiliating public failure with a shoddy product a second time in a row—came up with a brilliant solution: Make it look successful by advertising it as a free upgrade to get people's attention, forcing the it onto their largest user base with aggressive advertising, automatic downloads, and early next year, automatic installation regardless of society's wishes. As expected, Windows 10 took off like a cannon, promising to overtake Windows 8.1 in less than a month. Then something happened: People suddenly realized that they were being duped with what was actually Windows 8.2, and word started getting around of bricked machines, stability, performance and privacy issues, damaged software, and a newfangled (and still unwanted) UI, etc.

Microsoft struck back by pushing out another update that made machines everywhere automatically consume — without asking for permission — 3-6 GB of Internet bandwidth and disk space. Failure to complete the download frequently resulted in it starting over from the beginning. ***During those weeks, there were numerous, random Internet outages nationwide all over the news, although Windows 10 was never blamed.*** *Talking with my local ISP, he indicated that the automatic download of Windows 10 was killing his network with bandwidth consumption rates way beyond anything he had ever seen before, to the point that he was considering isolating and throttling that traffic. I think Windows 10 broke the Internet. The fact that Apple released a big OS update around the same time certainly didn't help.*

And now, despite the unprecedented hype, pressure, and infrastructure, after 3 months, Windows 10's rate of adoption only slightly exceeds that of Windows 7, an OS that just a few years ago people were rushing to stores and paying $100+ out

of their own desire and volition to install. Just think of what would have happened to Vista and XP had Windows 7 been a free upgrade! I know of many people who would gladly upgrade their old (but decently spec'ed) XP and Vista machines to Windows 7 today if it was free.

After Vista was released, the vast majority not only continued to use XP, but continued paying for, and upgrading to XP for a couple years, leading to it peaking at 79% less than a year before Windows 7 was released.

After Windows 8 was released, the vast majority stayed on Windows 7, despite free or reduced pricing. In fact, Windows 8 was so unwanted that several computer manufacturers re-released product lines preloaded with Windows 7 in an attempt to stop losing customers to Apple and Samsung. Windows 8x was so bad it topped out at 21% market share, below that of Windows Vista at 24%, despite having nearly the same amount of time between them and their successors.

You would have had to work in the private tech/tech support sector to appreciate how badly Windows Vista and Windows 8 were received.

"Great spirits have always found violent opposition from mediocrities. The latter cannot understand when a man does not thoughtlessly submit to hereditary prejudices but honestly and courageously uses his intelligence." - Albert Einstein

Then a message appeared in the Insider Hub.

Hello,

As you might have already heard, we just released a major Windows update to the world. This desktop update is packed with nearly 200 new capabilities, many of which were developed directly as a result of feedback from Insiders like you. Check out Terry Myerson's blog for more details — and thanks, as always, for your feedback.

The long awaited November update was a huge disappointment, just more of the same. This proclaimed Redstone update was not expected to change many opinions, based on their prior experiences. Many Insiders committed to stay on Windows 7, and a few using Windows 8.1. A few tried out the various Linux variants available. Most would not use a Mac, no matter what. Now at the end of a twenty-five year road, the Insiders did not know which way to turn. They felt somewhat like Atlas must have.[94]

The above-mentioned blog post also included the following language.

> *We've talked a lot about our Windows Insider Program, and how that open, collaborative process has been so critical to the choices we've made in building Windows 10. I want to thank the Windows Insiders who have continued to participate and invest their time and energy in the program.*

Lefty initiated a discussion thread in the Insider Forum, which posed another question.

> *The Insider Program was a "collaborative process?"*
>
> *Chuck_Cutler started November 17*
>
> *"We've talked a lot about our Windows Insider Program, and how that open, collaborative process has been so critical to the choices we've made in building Windows 10. I want to thank the Windows Insiders who have continued to participate and invest their time and energy in the program."*
>
> *What is he talking about?*
>
> *1. Aero blur?*
>
> *2. 4th tile row on Start Screen?*

---

[94] *In Greek mythology, Atlas sided with the Titans in their war against the Olympians. When the Titans were defeated, Zeus condemned Atlas to stand at the western edge of the Earth and hold up the sky on his shoulders.*

3. Color on the window title bars? They needed our help with that?

4. Putting the power button at the bottom of the Start button popup?

5. Anything else?

"I was not successful as a ballplayer, as it is a game of skill," – Legendary baseball manager - Casey Stengel

IanRG replied on November 17

The mail and calendar app has been regularly updated as a result of feedback

The restriction on the number of instances of the calculator has been lifted

The restriction on the number of pinned apps on the Start menu was lifted

The rubbishing of the early recycle bin resulted in an improved look

The quick fixes to a number of problems found by fast ring insiders - yes, they are going to be a mix of ones that never should have happened, should have been found before the fast ring and others

The telemetry data from insiders machines to fix intra-Windows issues and drivers

The first fix I saw that immediately following my comments here was issues with the Myanmar on-screen keyboard (but note that this has not been fixed in Windows 10 Mobile)

The volume control orientation was different on the video player from Groove Music, Windows Media Player and the Windows DVD player. This was corrected once as soon as it was raised here.

Issues with live tile rotation were corrected

The contents of context menus in the Start menu were expanded

That the desktop context menu was expanded to suit fingers and not suit mouse, touchpad or pen was corrected to adapts to how you use the context menu

That is a quick list off the top of my head. I am sure there are many more as the program has been going for a while now.

In reply to IanRG's post

"The quick fixes to a number of problems found by fast ring insiders - yes, they are going to be a mix of ones that never should have happened, should have been found before the fast ring and others

That is a quick list off the top of my head. I am sure there are many more as the program has been going for a while now."

Chuck Cutler replied

Due to the half-baked nature of this product, you can't credit Insiders for getting MS to finish building the apps that were released half built.

And notice that he was not talking about fixing bugs. He was talking specifically about the "collaborative process has been so critical to the choices we've made in building Windows 10"

The only one of yours that might qualify is the multiple instances of calculator, but then you would have to suspend the knowledge that we have always had this, and congratulate MS on knowing how to still do it after all these years.

Can you run multiple instances of any other apps?

"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." - Thomas A. Edison

Then some new information appeared in the forum.

Windows 10 Sucks!!!

All replies (236)

Greg Carmack - MS MVP replied on November 18

In reply to jacklowell's post on November 18

Unfortunately the Go Back is not very stable as it's a reverse Upgrade and not an image which is always best to restore Windows in 20 minutes for any reason: Windows 7 System Image backup.

What I would do is a Repair Install of Windows 7 to refresh the install.

Please work from my replies in thread and not the notification email as I frequently edit and add.

"If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there." Traveling Wilburys, Any Road

Barcode.Zero replied on November 19

Removing windows 10

Unfortunately Microsoft has designed the revert back option very poorly, so its full of bugs and much like the rest of windows 10 is prone to failure. So backup all your data first before proceeding and be prepared to reinstall your original os from disk or backup image in case the thing falls into an unbootable heap then go to Settings > Update & Security >look under the go back to windows x heading, and click get started removing windows spyware "updates" on windows 7 & 8x

Unfortunately, Microsoft has rolled out windows10's SPYWARE (aka telemetry) to windows 7 and other updates to prepare windows 7 to accept windows 10.

additionally some of these updates have been shown to cause instability in windows 7, therefor the following "updates" for windows 7 should be uninstalled and hidden to prevent installation

KB3035583 – "Update installs Get Windows 10 app in Windows 8.1 and Windows 7 SP1"

Gives you the windows 10 invite

KB2952664 – "Compatibility update for upgrading Windows 7" prepares system for upgrade to Windows 10, sends a bunch of telemetry data to M$, , nagware patch that touts the Windows 10 upgrade, !reported to corrupt system files

KB2990214 – "Update that enables you to upgrade from Windows 7 to a later version of Windows" prepares system for upgrade to Windows 10

KB2977759 – "Compatibility update for Windows 7 RTM" prepares system for upgrade to Windows 10, installs telemetry (SPYWARE)

KB3021917– "Update to Windows 7 SP1 for performance improvements" prepares system for upgrade to Windows 10

KB3022345 – "Update for customer experience and diagnostic telemetry" installs diagnostic/usage tracking service (SPYWARE) !reported to corrupt system files

KB3068708 – "Update for customer experience and diagnostic telemetry" installs telemetry service (SPYWARE), prepares system for upgrade to Windows 10

KB3015249 – "Update that adds telemetry points to consent.exe in Windows 8.1 and Windows 7"

Telemetry, reports UAC prompt choices when making changes to the system (SPYWARE)

KB3075249 – "Update that adds telemetry points to consent.exe in Windows 8.1 and Windows 7"

Telemetry, reports UAC prompts to Microsoft (SPYWARE)

KB3080149 – "Update for customer experience and diagnostic telemetry" Update for customer experience and diagnostic telemetry, CEIP (SPYWARE)

KB3050265 – "Windows Update Client for Windows 7: June" supposedly fixes an issue with windows update, but also changes system files to support upgrade to Windows 10

KB2922324 - (reportedly pulled, uninstall it anyway if already installed)

KB3065987 - makes "improvements" to the windows update client (really just more Win10 garbage)

KB3075851 - makes "improvements" to the windows update client (really just more Win10 garbage)

Windows 8.1, Windows RT 8.1 and Windows Server 2012 R2 ONLY

KB3050267 - Windows Update Client for Windows 8.1: June supposedly fixes an issue with windows update, but also changes system files to support upgrade to Windows 10

KB3044374 – "Update that enables you to upgrade from Windows 8.1 to Windows 10" prepares system for upgrade to Windows 10

KB2976978 - prepares system for upgrade to Win10

KB3014460 - affects windows 8 only preventing windows10 re-infection

Microsoft made sure this was quite difficult, and still is to do manually, however someone has finally made it easy to remove and prevent the system from becoming re-infected with windows 10, note this does not remove the telemetry spying as noted above

"I've had a perfectly wonderful evening, but this wasn't it." - Groucho Marx

Canadian Tech replied on November 19

In reply to Barcode.Zero's post on November 19

Purfect, Barcode.zero. That is pretty much exactly what I have published to my 150 clients and many others.

I would add one more thing: Set Windows Update settings to NEVER and run it just once a month. When it runs, be careful to "hide" any of the updates you have listed to prevent them from being installed.

I have advised my clients to do what I have dreaded doing for years — turn off Automatic Windows Update.

The problem is stems from an incessant drive by Microsoft to install Windows 10 on your computer without your permission. They keep re-installing KB3035583 (that is the enabler) on your computer, even if you uninstall and hide it. The result is the huge download and then constant nags without an apparent way to say no.

So I have advised my clients to shut down WU. Once a month on the 2nd Tuesday, they will get an email from me advising to manually start WU and then to reject specific updates like KB3035583. Then update. WU remains on NEVER.

Some may scoff at this idea. Well they are incorrect. Never means you are never giving Microsoft a chance to decide what you download and install. It does NOT mean you will never update. The difference is that now you take control and the responsibility of updating of Windows and Office.

Some may believe that Microsoft would not do such a stupid thing. You must read Woody Leonhard (one of the most respected writers in the trade)

If you see the Windows flag on the bottom right of your screen, chances are pretty high, your computer already has the Win10 file. Even if you do not, it may be on your computer shortly anyway. Here are instructions on how to rid yourself of it:

If you are using windows 7, and have not installed win10 and do not want it, here is a procedure that I have used many times and it works.

This process works, but it only works if you do all the steps and do them in order.

1. Take Windows Update off automatic — Never check for updates

2. Task Manager, processes, find and end GWX.exe

3. Windows Update, Installed updates, WAIT a long time till you see the green bar complete its long trip to the right

4. Now, search for KB3035583, uninstall it

5. If there are others you want to uninstall, click Later

6. Then, clear the search box and after a brief wait, enter another KB number.

7. Restart the PC

8. Disk cleanup — this takes a while. It is a 2 step process. After the initial window appears, click the "Clean up system files" button

9. You may find a "Temporary Windows Installation files" there that is anywhere from 4 to 8 Gigabytes. It is the Win10 downloaded file. Put a check mark on that item.

10. OK, Delete Files

11. Restart

12. The startup will take a long time while it finishes cleanup

You will find a tool that effectively prevents an OS update referred to in this Woody Leonhard article. Keep in mind that this tool does not remove the spy updates.

If you choose "check for updates, but let me choose whether to download and install them", Microsoft will download an "important" updates like KB3035583 to your computer. It will be pre-checked — selected. Unless you check Windows Update (WU) and discover this BEFORE you shut down, it will install it during the shut-down process. Hiding it does nothing.

If you are going to take control of your computer and prevent Microsoft from downloading and installing their malware, you have to lock them out altogether.

I am advising my clients that they take full control and responsibility for WU from now on. I will advise them each 2nd Tuesday of the month on the to start WU, uncheck specific updates and complete the update. For now, KB3035583 and KB2952664 as well as KB2977759, KB3075249, KB3080149, KB3083710, KB3083324, KB3022345, KB3090045 and KB3068708.

You will find a constantly updated list of windows updates to reject at Ask Woody

This is more than annoying. It goes way beyond that. It is underhanded, dishonest and just plain wrong for Microsoft to do this. There is no offer to accept or refuse. There is no informed consent. There is not even an idea of what it is your getting and what the result is if you change your mind.

This will happen to your computer whether want it or not!

Once you have it downloaded to your computer, it will nag you very frequently and not offer you an option to stop it or reject it. It will not even allow you to update Windows 7 any longer.

"Absolute truth is a very rare and dangerous commodity in the context of professional journalism." - Hunter S. Thompson

Chuck_Cutler replied on November 19

In Reply to Canadian Tech's post on November 19

I would disagree. MS has become so vague and abusive about updates that you can't trust any of them.

Shut it off, leave it off and live a happy life.

"Most things I worry about never happen anyway." Tom Petty

Then the news moved towards sad, projecting a clear signal that MS cared little about those users having limited Internet bandwidth.[95] This includes the majority of the developing world, for which this OS was apparently aimed, seemingly at the expense of the developed world.

[UPDATED] Microsoft has pulled the Windows 10 November Update from Windows Update

Zac Bowden, WinBeta.org/news Nov 21

Update: Microsoft has responded with comment regarding the situation. They say the update has not been pulled, and instead the November Update is rolling out over time. This still doesn't explain why the Media Creation Tool is no longer offering 10586, or why the SDKs were pulled from Microsoft servers.

Update 2: Microsoft has provided us with a further comment explaining the situation.

Earlier today, we reported that the Windows 10 November Update was no longer being offered via the Media Creation Tool[96], and it now appears the update has also been pulled from Windows Update, meaning it is no longer being offered for Windows 7, 8.1 and 10 users looking to upgrade directly.

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[95] *Bandwidth in computing, is the rate of data transfer, measured in bits per second (bit/s)*

[96] *The MS Media Creation Tool creates installation files for Windows 10. It consists of a software wizard making the process a matter of pressing a few 'Next' buttons. To use it your computer must be connected to the Internet, because all the installation files are downloaded.*

Microsoft has not made any announcement as to why it has pulled the November Update, but users looking to install it via Windows Update are now met with no download being offered. It also appears the 10586 SDK has been pulled from Microsoft servers too.

It's too early to tell whether the build has been pulled due to problems with the build itself, or whether it's a simple technical error. WinBeta has contacted Microsoft for comment regarding the situation, but we likely won't hear a response until Monday. Until then, why do you think the update has been pulled? Let us know below!

Microsoft explains disappearance of the Windows 10 November Update from Media tool

Zac Bowden, WinBeta.org/news Nov 21

Earlier today, we reported that the Windows 10 November Update had been pulled from Windows Update, meaning it was no longer being offered to Windows 7, 8.1 and 10 users. It also appears to have been pulled from the Media Creation Tool, meaning you can no longer do in-place upgrades with an ISO, as the tool is no longer offering the ISO for download.

Microsoft has since told WinBeta that the Windows 10 November Update has not been pulled from Windows Update, instead the update will roll out over time, much like the original Windows 10 launch back in July.

The Redmond giant has also detailed why the Media Creation Tool is no longer offering the November Update as an ISO. Microsoft has decided that future installs of the November Update should happen through Windows Update, meaning the tool will now download build 10240, and upgrade to the November Update once build 10240 is installed.

Microsoft's official comment(s) are below:

> *The November update was originally available via the MCT (Media Creation Tool), but the company decided that future installs should be through Windows Update. People can still download Windows 10 [Build 10240] using the MCT tool if they wish. The November update will be delivered via Windows Update.*
> *Microsoft has not pulled the Windows 10 November 10 update. The company is rolling out the November update over time – if you don't see it in Windows Update, you will see it soon.*

As mentioned above, there doesn't appear to be a clear reason as to why Microsoft has made this change. It doesn't make much sense for Microsoft to suddenly want users to upgrade via Windows Update, when not too long ago they were recommending users create an ISO for manual upgrade if they didn't want to use Windows Update. Very confusing indeed.

We'll update this story once we know more. Until then, what are your thoughts on this? Let us know below.

Then the final word came, and the story was over at least for now.

Microsoft pulled the Windows 10 November Update due to privacy setting bug

Zac Bowden Nov 24

Microsoft has today detailed why they chose to pull the Windows 10 November Update from Windows Update and the Media Creation Tool over the weekend. Their initial comment regarding the situation claimed the company decided that all users needed to update via Windows Update, but it appears that was not the entire story.

Microsoft told WinBeta the update was pulled due to issues with privacy concerns. More specifically, upon installing the update, Windows would not remember the users had set privacy settings, meaning Windows would simply default them. While not a huge bug, it did raise a few privacy concerns amongst those upgrading.

The update was only pulled from Windows Update for Windows 10 users, as those users are the ones who were affected by this bug. Users upgrading from Windows 7 and Windows 8.1 were unaffected.

Microsoft says they have now fixed this issue with a patch, and are in the process of putting the November Update back on Windows Update and Media Creation Tool, which is good news for those who are still waiting to upgrade to the November Update, released on the 12th of this month.

The positive press below covered a superficial view, and did not formally interview or put on the record, any of these *so-called* early adopting enterprises.

Half of all enterprises to start Windows 10 rollouts in the next year

The rate of adoption may outpace that of Windows 7 and Windows 8

Blair Hanley Frank IDG News Service Nov 23

Half of all enterprises will have at least started their roll-outs of Windows 10 by January 2017, according to a Gartner report released Monday, suggesting the OS is on track for rapid adoption.

The prediction is based on significant interest that Gartner analyst Steve Kleynhans has seen during conversations with clients about their plans. While enterprises are known for taking their time with software updates, Kleynhans says they're moving fast with Windows 10.

"I've stopped being surprised when I talk to customers now and they tell me how fast they're moving," he said in an interview. "Six months ago, I was completely shocked when I talked to customers and they'd tell me they're planning on getting started right away, and now it's just the norm for our customers."

That interest is driven by a few key factors, the first of which is recent experiences migrating from Windows XP. According to Kleynhans, companies found that experience so painful that they want to get started on a new migration as quickly as possible, since Microsoft has been very clear that Windows 7's end of life is in 2020.

But there's a wrinkle to all that: Kleynhans says transitioning to Windows 10 is easier than making the switch from Windows XP to Windows 7, so companies evaluating the new operating system are finding it easier to just drop the OS into an existing Windows 7 environment.

Kleynhans also said that there's a small amount of pent-up demand for new devices like touchscreen laptops and business-class Windows tablets. Windows 10 has reinvigorated businesses that were previously stymied by having to use Windows 8 if they wanted to roll out those devices.

"They looked at those [devices] and said 'Yeah, those would be great,' and then they ran headlong into Windows 8. And [they] realized that to roll out those nifty new devices, [they] needed to roll out Windows 8, and that just was a non-starter."

That's not to say Microsoft's new operating system is a slam dunk. Kleynhans said that every major organization has to contend with developing a strategy for dealing with the ongoing cumulative updates Microsoft is pushing to its new

operating system. While the decision to require cumulative updates has caused consternation among IT professionals, Kleynhans thinks that enterprises will be able to handle it okay.

"Companies by and large initially were very concerned about it, now that they're looking at it a little closer, they're starting to develop some thoughts about how to deal with it and some processes are starting to gel on how they'll handle those kinds of updates," he said. "And I think by the time organizations are ready to start real deployments, they'll have a process and they'll feel fairly comfortable about how they're going to handle those updates."

If businesses live up to Gartner's expectations, Windows 10's uptake in the enterprise will outpace the adoption for both Windows 7 and Windows 8. Microsoft has said that it expects to have 1 billion devices running Windows 10 within 3 years, and this new report would seem to indicate that's getting closer to the company's grasp.

From the comments section below the article:

TsarNikky

This is to be expected, especially with installations having a Microsoft "enterprise" service/support relationship. What about the rest of us? How many can afford PC crashes due to a "rogue" auto update; and MS's response is on the order of "Ooops, sorry, we'll get around to fixing it?" I would suspect few to none.

Then there was a less than optimistic news story assessment of the current situation.

Windows 10 Adoption Rate Slows During October

Shirley Siluk / NewsFactor Network November 02

As the latest figures from StatCounter and Netmarketshare for October show slowing adoption rates for Windows 10, Microsoft is looking at ways to nudge more users into its new operating system.

The company revealed last week that it will soon classify Windows 10 as an "optional update" for users with devices still running Windows 7 and Windows 8.1. And early next year, it plans to re-categorize Windows 10 as a "recommended update."

Originally, upgrading to Windows 10 consisted of a two-step process. First, users would have to request free copies of the OS. The company would then notify them at a later date when they could start the upgrade process. Now, the upgrade process will begin automatically once users reserve their copies.

Once listed as a recommended update, the upgrade process will begin automatically for any users who have the automatic upgrade option activated.

Windows 10 has now been downloaded by more than 110 million users, according to Microsoft's most recently published update on October 12. Despite a fast start, though, adoption of the new OS has recently slowed down.

Slowing Adoption after Fast Start

The latest data from Netmarketshare gives Windows 10 a 7.94 percent share of the total desktop operating system market. That's up from 6.63 percent in September.

StatCounter, which uses different metrics, reports the Windows 10 market share at 9 percent, compared to 7.64 percent in September.

While both tracking firms continue to see Windows 10 usage rising, the rates of that increase have definitely slowed since the OS was launched on July 29.

"Windows 10 came out of the traps much faster than Windows 8 and also exceeded the launch of Windows 7," StatCounter CEO Aodhan Cullen said in early September.

Microsoft is so eager to see the new OS take off, it's even talking about helping users with pirated copies of earlier versions of Windows get their hands on Windows 10. The company said last week that it would be experimenting with making it easier for people in the United States to upgrade pirated copies of Windows to the new version.

Windows 7 Still Leads

In a post on the Windows blog Thursday, Terry Myerson, Executive Vice President of the Windows and Devices Group at Microsoft, encouraged users who haven't yet upgraded to Windows 10 to consider the move. He noted that anyone who doesn't like the new OS will have 31 days to revert back to their older versions of Windows.

"Depending upon your Windows Update settings, this may cause the upgrade process to automatically initiate on your device," Myerson noted. "Before the upgrade changes the OS of your device, you will be clearly prompted to choose whether or not to continue. And of course, if you choose to upgrade (our recommendation!), then you will have 31 days

to roll back to your previous Windows version if you don't love it."
He added that the automatic download will not initiate for Windows 7 and Windows 8.1 users with metered connections who turn off automatic updates.
According to Netmarketshare's latest data, the most used OS is still Windows 7, with a 55.71 percent share of users on desktop devices, followed by Windows XP with 11.68 percent and Windows 8.1 with 10.68 percent. However, those shares are down from September, when they stood at 56.53 percent, 12.21 percent and 10.72 percent, respectively.

The reality of the November update started sinking in on the Epic Fail private forum.

Yep, they did the worst of what we expected with build 10586

Thread started Nov 14

Over the past day or two those who are not on the insider track have received their Windows 10 build 10586 updates. The promised 4 month rollout of an in-place upgrade has arrived.

3 gigabytes of download, system install time of at least half an hour on even a screaming fast machine, and, no matter how nicely we had reconfigured build 10240, in 10586 we find...

•Apps reinstalled, including Cortana and OneDrive, even though they had been completely de-provisioned.

•Configuration options are reset to MICROSOFT's preferences, even if they had been specifically set.

•Most specifically, PRIVACY settings (such as SmartScreen) have been reset!

•Desktop tweaks and augments broken, leaving possibly the ugliest desktop theme yet.

Even though I had quieted version 10240 down nicely, after boot up and thereafter I see the updated system (including some new components I hadn't seen before, such as compattelrunner.exe) trying continuously to communicate with all kinds of servers online - places like v10.vortex-win.data.microsoft.com, bing.com, and a dozen others.

It almost makes me want to sign up for another Microsoft account just to call those Microsoft morons the fucktards that they are on their own forum.

The thing I distinctly am NO LONGER excited about is figuring out how to reconfigure this shithole of an OS post "up" grade back into something not worth formatting into oblivion.

Maybe after re-removing all the Apps the thing will settle down again, but who really wants to have to go use PowerShell again?

-JNC

"I have always wished that my computer would be as easy to use as my telephone. My wish has come true. I no longer know how to use my telephone." - Bjarne Stroustrup, inventor of the C++ computer language.

Inspired by the endless discussions and lamentations over Windows 10 and the Windows Update service, Lefty composed and posted a little ditty.

Oh Microsoft!

For decades, you gave us KB updates holding information
With Win10 you took control and gave us obfuscation
You offered Insiders KB's for our dissection
Your dishonesty was met by our rejection
You offered spyware as telemetric intrusions
We knew better – no longer under any illusions
Security was the blanket explanation now for all
Into this trap many users did fall
Forcing Win10 on us was the motive for this deception
The uninformed received a silent Win10 infection
Outsiders gave it a poor reception
The informed prevented the downgrade and corruption
We still long for an honest Win7 SP2 injection
Win10 doesn't pass our inspection
Outsiders clearly know that this isn't perfection

"One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors." - Plato

Then the news got worse again, because well, that was the long-term trend.

Beware, latest Windows 10 Update may remove programs automatically

Martin Brinkmann on November 24 in Windows: Microsoft's Windows 10 operating system may uninstall programs -- desktop programs that is -- from the computer after

installation of the big Fall update that the company released earlier this month.

I noticed the issue on one PC that I upgraded to Windows 10 Version 1511 but not on other machines. The affected PC had Speccy, a hardware information program, installed and Windows 10 notified me after the upgrade that the software had been removed from the system because of incompatibilities.

There was no indication beforehand that something like this would happen, and what made this rather puzzling was the fact that a newly downloaded copy of Speccy would install and run fine on the upgraded system.

According to reports on the Internet, Speccy is not the only program affected by this. Others report that programs like CPU-Z, AMD Catalyst Control Center or CPUID were removed as well during the upgrade.

AMD's Catalyst Control Center needs to be mentioned specifically as it is a core program for Radeon users allowing them to control various video card settings directly from within the operating system. It is unclear which versions of the programs are removed by the upgrade, and if there are versions that are not removed.

All applications share that they interact with computer hardware, either by creating a list of installed hardware or controlling hardware via software.

While this could very well be a bug that slipped by Microsoft's quality control, it is a serious issue not only because of the removal itself, but also when it comes to the future of the operating system.

The removal itself is bad enough. First, Microsoft should have the decency to inform users about the issue before the software is removed. Either do a check prior to running the upgrade or afterwards.

Then, all reports indicate that the forcefully uninstalled software would install and run fine on the system without issues. This makes it more likely that a bug caused the issue and that it was not a deliberate action programmed into the update.

The outlook is even worse. Who in their right mind would install an operating system that might remove installed software -- maybe even paid for software or critical software -- without user interaction or consent, especially if it turns out later that the software works just fine on the system?

Windows 10 users give up control and since there is no way of telling if software will be removed after a Windows update, should consider backing up the system regularly before

system updates so that it can be restored to an earlier stage if important software was removed by the update.

Back in the Insider forum, the fanbois and MS shills started peaking in full BS mode. Most of the seasoned Insiders had given up and left for other places including the Win10 Epic Fail forum environment.

Chuck_Cutler replied on November 29

In reply to IanRG's post on November 28

"No, in my opinion we need to sell the benefits of a more engaged community of developers and artists by adding theming support within Win 10 in the future. My suggestion is for MS to show us how we can do this safely and stability by providing an add-in that can theme Win 10. The first example of this would be a Win 10 theme with more Aero like features - 3D glass effects on the taskbar, title bar, borders, background of the Start menu and to differentiate the pin area from jumps and all apps areas, system button, ribbon bars etc."

Reply

I know that this is a thread about Aero, but you make it sound like Aero Glass would be the be all and end all of the problems with Windows 10 and this isn't even remotely true.

Let's start at the ground level and not the UI.

We have a decade old kernel that fails to take advantage of multicore processors, ddr4 memory, ssd drives, sli graphics etc. All the talk is about mobile and thin and light if you haven't noticed. Nothing about powerful, nothing about speed, (other than marketing tricks like fast boot). Why don't we have a true multithreaded OS yet?

We have an ancient file system that has not advanced significantly in two decades, when we should have a rich object driven 3D FS. Many of us want rich, granular and extensible local search, not a Bing clickbait web search.

I won't even go into data harvesting, surveillance, adware and spyware for now.

Do you really think that government, military, scientific, and research institutions are going to go anywhere near Windows 10?

MS has chosen to go where it thinks the money is for now in mobile and leave the rest of us behind.

It is then little wonder that many long in the tooth users, do not follow you millennials like lemmings over a cliff.

"A cynic is a man who, when he smells flowers, looks around for a coffin." - H.L. Mencken

Windows 10 continued making the news.

Windows 10 lags 7, 8 … and even Vista in the channel race

Research firm notes 'considerable' increase between October and November

Windows 10 is not proving as popular as Microsoft's earlier clients – even the hated ones – among the channel.

The number of PCs pre-installed with Windows 10 moving through western Europe's distribution channel in the four months since launch is lower than for Windows 7, and the hated Windows Vista and Windows 8 over the same post-launch period, according to market research firm Context.

On the plus side, Context noted a "considerable" increase between October and November.

Windows 10 was pre-installed on 67 per cent of home, and 25 per cent of business machines, in the first-two weeks of November. That compares with 43 per cent of home, and 17 per cent of business, for the month before.

PC makers driving growth were Hewlett Packard, Lenovo, ASUS and Acer, with most of the machines sold being notebooks, some 93 per cent.

Of these notebooks, 14 per cent employed detachable or convertible screens.

But while Windows 10 is growing, its uptake among PC makers is behind the curve, historically speaking.

Windows 7 was resident on 86 per cent of machines during the same four-month period after its 2009 release with Windows Vista and Windows 8 on 88 per cent and 90 per cent, respectively.

Context doesn't explain the differences, but reasons might include the fact PC makers and channel partners were heavily bought into earlier clients.

Experience, underwhelming demand for machines, and politics with Redmond as the firm has introduced its own Surface laptop, will have dampened enthusiasm.

Lefty was now busy lately assembling and installing his new snowplow for his Jeep, winterizing his house and storage shed, selling old computer parts on eBay, and plowing snow. He also kept up on reading the messages in the Insider and Win10 Epic Fail forums. He did not have time for about a month to drop over into the regular Windows 10 forum and help, until today. Reading and responding to messages from rookie users and towards the end of twenty-two pages in one day, he stumbled across an interesting one.

*Windows 10 is Satan, May it Rot In ****

MogulInc started on December 3

Now that I have your attention, perhaps someone can explain what pimple-faced moron at Microsoft believed it prudent to take a perfectly configured, tweaked operating environment and erase in its entirety 12 years of details, settings, and program installations crafted through 2 or 3 hard drives and at least three OS upgrades.

*If I didn't know better, I would conclude Microsoft doesn't give a rats butt about the piece of **** named Windows10 and the havoc it is wreaking on the traditional PC market.*

There I was, happily running WIN7, 64 on a higher end Core2 processor. Slowly but steadily, I was harassed into the Win10 upgrade by incessant, unending pop ups that I could not get rid of. Again, and again, and again. I did not want to do it, but I needed the damned pop ups to stop.

I succumbed to the Fascist Microsoft marketing team.

My first impression was that nothing worked. Did not matter what program. It wouldn't run. Add to that no email for a month because Windows refused to believe I was who I said I was. Then, I learned I was wholly unauthorized to ever again save files to my local hard drives in my system. I probably should not mention too the simple fact that each and every keystroke, web visit, email, note, password, financial record ... all are recorded and shared with the big MS US Government server in the cloud (which is probably located physically in NV).

Let's just say Win10 did not make a good first impression.

Finally, roughly a month after making the biggest damned mistake of my PC life some pimply faced jerk in a cubicle decides I am worthy and authorizes me to access my own

*damned email from my email app. Things start working and I am happy albeit for a brief period. Sort of. I can no longer write to any physical drive connected to my system. I also discover that customized configuration settings mysteriously reset themselves every time I look away from my PC, making it clear the MS Reichstag insists I use Win10 ONLY as the way the pimple faced little **** in the cubicle says I can. Period. And, of course, my information is still flowing out of my keyboard and into that great MS US Government server in the cloud (located in NV).*

Life is a utopia.

*Then one day, quite out of the blue, I log in to find an update has completely wiped my desktop, program settings, installed programs ... essentially my entire history and identity from the computer. And once again, of course, I no longer have access to email let alone an email app. Can't be trusted with email. The pimply faced little **** in the corner cubicle has changed his mind.*

48 hours later, as mysteriously as everything disappears, the system returns to normal. No explanation. No "sorry we F'd up your system" note. Nothing.

Another few weeks go by. No local write access. Oh, I can write to any network drive, say the one in the MS US Government drive in Utah, but not to a local drive. But email works. Google Chrome, something I switched to because Edge and IE suck donkey dick, works. Then again one morning ... BLAM. Microsoft shoots me in the head the second time. No settings. No desktop. No installed programs. Oh, it's me alright, Good 'ol Mogulinc. Just without any of the 10 years' worth of local identity or account information. And I still cannot write to a local drive. And ... no email. Gone. Kiss that app off. Bye-bye!

Problem is, it appears my stuff is not coming back this time. No email. No programs. No nothing, for days.

So I do a system restore. Absolutely no change. None. As amazing as that sounds, it is true. No change to the system even though it says it was restored to a date BEFORE the wipe. So what is a guy to do?

*Your idea of help, Microsoft? Useless. Your FAQ's? Have nothing to do any situation involving a person with a brain evolved beyond that of a blood worm. Your technical support? Yeah. Right. Got a good chuckle from the "Go solve **** on*

your own" approach Microsoft brings to the table. Just give us your money, right?

*Oops ... I forgot. It was FREE! FREE I tell you. What should I expect. Until I remember being almost pop-upped to death before the upgrade. Or until I recall that this FREE **** overwrote an operating system costing several hundred dollars and software costing in the thousands. Until I remember that the FREE Win10 has rendered useless a box costing several grand at the time it was built. Until I remember that half of my software no longer runs on the wonderful FREE platform. Yup. FREE **** is great, isn't it Microsoft?*

I simply cannot express the depth of hatred and loathing I hold toward Microsoft and the Windows10 platform at the moment. It is beyond words for a rational mind. You pricks literally have made 10 years of computing identity simply go away.

Why? To pretend my PC is a stinking phone? A phone? Really? Your Mom must be so damned proud.

PS ...If anyone, I mean anyone has even a remote clue as to how to recover the 10 years of vanished local persona, please comment. With that in mind, I hold no serious expectation. I am convinced at this juncture that no one, absolutely understands this Titanic dung heap of an OS.

"Reality leaves a lot to the imagination." - John Lennon

Now granted, if this particular user had done a complete remote backup before attempting the upgrade, he would not have suffered these effects. Having then experienced significant problems, the user could have simply given up on the failed Windows 10 experiment to restore his computer back to the original state before MS destroyed it. Few regular computer users however, know how to entirely backup or restore programs and data to and from their computers.

Sure Lefty was doing everyday complete image backups to an external hard drive or to Network Attached Storage, NAS, for many years on his computers, but he was a geek like most of the Insiders. He was the exception not the rule.

On the other hand, this OS had been on the market for four plus months, and was given numerous updates, and in a

supposed functional form. This would lead the uninitiated, not tuned into media reporting, to believe the product essentially worked. This particular user was not an Insider who signed up for beta testing. He was only a typical computer user. He did not know the restore function built into Windows 10 had not worked reliably for more than a year now. Besides the OS was free, and MS did everything possible to make you accept this download, short of putting a gun to your head.

Back in the good old days when you visited a retail store, or computer repair shop, to buy a Windows CD or DVD to install, you likely ran into someone who you could question and would guide you. At one time MS also provided functional phone technical support, but this was not the case now. Now downloaded to your computer without your consent or knowledge, with your acceptance of an "*update*" it simply began the OS install process. Because this was treated as a downloadable update and not a full OS install, people did not see it for what it really was, he surmised.

For years, decades essentially, Lefty tried to teach people about the differences between operating system level software and application level software. He spoke of how application software, like word processors and spreadsheet programs, used their computer code to talk to the operating system. The operating system however, talked directly to the hardware and as such was a more complicated and error prone thing to mess with. Lefty felt that end users, unless experienced, typically should not be involved in installing operating systems.

Microsoft was trying a huge experiment here, trying to deliver this OS installation as a downloadable OS update, as if for a smartphone. Lefty thought that this made MS's lackadaisical programmers overconfident, as they could now always just release an update to fix problems, which previously would have needed to be solved before release into the wild. Remembering the olden days, they used to call them "Showstopper" bugs, but now they released the software to the unsuspecting, and would try to fix it later with updates. This reminded him of an old Dobbie Brothers album title, "What were once vices are now habits." With MS, it was "What were once bugs are now unlisted features." MS also decided to try this experiment without any significant help desk or online support

people. The technical support people that were available, simply read prewritten scripts over the phone, or copied and pasted canned generic solutions into message replies on support forums.

"Have you tried turning it off and back on again"?[97]

This gamble, built atop the previously discussed elimination of most of the MS testing department, and their resulting replacement with the unsuspecting Insiders, proved to be a bridge too far.

Lefty did not respond to this message. Evident in his tone and the forum's automatic software filtering of his word choices, the user already knew what he would have to do. He would need to spend many days of painstaking work to put his computer system back to where it once was, without the help of Microsoft. Checking out the message sender's forum profile indicated he had only joined the day before, and did not know of the pain and suffering of the many thousands there. Lefty telling him this would not make either of them feel any better. Having worked in the computer business for twenty-five years now, Lefty already had been where this user was now, and displayed the scars as proof. As they say, you can always tell the pioneers by the arrows in their backs.

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[97] *The IT Crowd is a British sitcom which revolves around three staff members of its IT department, including one who answers every support phone call, before even listening to the complaint, with this phrase.*

The trolls and shills continued spouting off on the Insider forum.

In reply to Gage Mitchusson's post on December 6

"Windows 10 is not a Phone OS.

Windows 10 is a PC OS.

How is Windows 10 a Phone OS?

What features of Windows 10 do you think are for a Phone?"

Chuck_Cutler replied on December 7

You are just being disingenuous here now. You can't possibly be as ignorant as you sound.

I guess that you could call it RT rather than phone, but that is now deceased as another bad MS idea like BOB and Clippy.

Apps are phone

The colors are phone, the window design is phone

The menuing is phone, the icons are phone

The tiles are phone, the settings app is phone

The forced updates is phone, no Aero Glass is phone

The dumbed down capability of apps is phone

The interface spacing of everything is phone

To answer your question:

How about the Phone App that can't be removed from the All Apps menu or uninstalled? Does that meet your criteria?

All of this makes some of us very sad, here in Broken Promise Land.

"Computers make excellent and efficient servants, but I have no wish to serve under them." - Mr. Spock from Season 2, Episode 24 of the original Star Trek TV series.

That message would get him banned yet again. Later that day, Lefty returned to the Insider forum to read two messages.

Hello Chuck_Cutler

A.User

Your profile has been blocked.

Hello Chuck_Cutler,

The following threads on Microsoft Community have been removed by a moderator.

*Thread: Windows 10 is Satan, May it Rot In ****

Can a case be made for not shutting off all Microsoft updates on Windows 7, 8 and 10?

Why were these threads removed?
It's possible that the thread was off topic, violated the Code of Conduct, or was just a duplicate thread.
You are receiving this message either because you created the thread or you subscribed to it.
Thank you for being a part of Microsoft Community!

Other Insiders told him that the mods deleted his prior posts from other threads. The Mods erased any trace of Chuck_Cutler. Was he now an Unperson?[98]

Then MS made the news again.

Microsoft begins a more aggressive push to get users upgraded to Windows 10
Upgrade or else...we will keep asking you to
Christopher Drummer Dec 8
Even before Microsoft officially launched Windows 10 back in July, the Redmond based company made its intentions clear: it wanted its latest OS running everywhere. In April, the company revealed that its ambition is to have 1 billion machines running Windows 10 within 2 to 3 years. The initial strategy was seen on June 1 when users began seeing an "upgrade to Windows 10" icon. At this time, Microsoft was laying the foundation for Windows 10 to be installed on as many devices running Windows 7, 8, or 8.1 as possible.

The news media expressed opinions on what MS now looked like.

Microsoft is in an apologetic mood right now -- what next? 'Sorry for Windows 10'?
Mark Wilson Dec 12
Sorry may be the hardest word, but it seems to be tripping off Microsoft's tongue quite freely at the moment. Maybe it's the holiday season making the company look at itself, but we've had two apologies in recent days -- first, a semi-apology for

[98] *In the George Orwell book Nineteen Eighty-Four, an Unperson is someone who has been vaporized. Vaporization is when a person is secretly murdered and erased from society, the present, the universe, and existence.*

stealing OneDrive storage from people, and now it's sorry about the Surface Book and Surface Pro 4.
There are probably plenty of other things Microsoft might want to consider apologizing for while it is at it. How about the forced downloading of Windows 10 -- or the upgrade process that has baffled some? What about an apology for the frankly rubbish launch of their "Proof of Concept App" Microsoft Edge, which still doesn't have extensions? How about an apology for Windows 10 in general? Someone certainly needs to offer a heartfelt apology for Windows 10 Mobile.
But we could also look a little further back. It is never going to be too late to say sorry for Clippy, or MS Bob, or Vista, or even Windows 98ME, and many people would like Microsoft to offer some sort of apology for Skype, 'modern' apps, and many years of subjecting people to a technically backward Internet Explorer. What would you add to the list… and would 'sorry' be good enough?

Then came news that made it abundantly clear that MS had completely lost their collective minds.

Microsoft's steps up Windows 10 nagging
You upgrading now or tonight? Hey, let's do it now
The Register 15 Dec, Iain Thomson
Fire up any computer running Windows 7 or 8 and you'll be used to a message or three inviting you to upgrade to Windows 10. But the latest pop-up screen doesn't even give you a choice.
The large pop-up screen, which first appeared over the weekend, gives users the option of upgrading straight away or ... that evening. Users can still opt out by clicking on the red 'X' in the top right corner of the window, but less savvy computer users (part of Redmond's core market segments) might not figure that out.

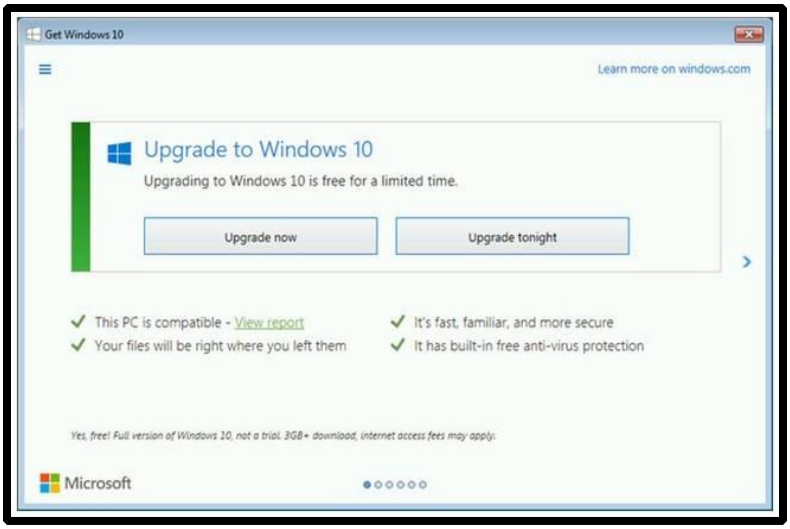


Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

The latest pop-up screen is yet another tactic by Microsoft to increase updates, but you have to wonder where the line is between helpful prodding and infuriating nagging.

As the holidays neared and the year was ending, Lefty stopped visiting the Insider forum. Then he was pulled back in temporarily by an email message.

From: Windows Insider

Sent: Tuesday, December 15

To: lefty@tcw.org

Subject: Complete our survey and get a chance to win a Microsoft Surface Book

Help us understand what's most important to you.

Hello,

With your help, we seek to make Windows better. Our team is committed to understanding – and responding to – your feedback. As Gabe Aul explains in his blog post on Insider Hub, your engagement helps improve not only Windows as a product, but also the Windows Insider Program itself.

Your feedback is most powerful when we can triangulate it across the Feedback App, your bug reports and error logs—and especially when we can understand a bit more about you as a person, your motivations in taking part in the Insider Program, and what you think about our progress to date. To

deepen this understanding, we'd like to invite you to take a short survey to help us improve the Insider Program for you.

To proceed with the survey, please click on the link below or copy into your Internet browser. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete.

Please know we take your privacy and trust extremely seriously. We are committed to providing the best survey experience for you. In his blog post (Insider Hub), Gabe wrote about several of the ways we're doing this. For example, survey results are not associated with personal information unless you choose to provide your name or email address, and we follow all Microsoft privacy standards. That said, as with all aspects of the Windows Insider Program, we want to continually improve. We welcome your thoughts: here is a forum for any questions or suggestions you may have.

*We truly value hearing from each and every Insider. As a small token of our appreciation for helping us improve, if you complete the survey and choose to include your Microsoft email address (MSA), you'll automatically be entered into a sweepstakes to win a free Microsoft Surface Book! Details on the sweepstakes can be found at bottom of this email.**

Thanks again for helping make Windows – and the Windows Insider Program – even better,

The Windows Insider Team

**Sweepstakes details: No purchase necessary. Sweepstakes open only to registered members of the Windows Insiders Program who received this email as a first party invitation from Microsoft to take the survey and enter the sweepstakes. Ends on December 22.*

You received with email because you signed up for the Windows Insider Program.

This email is sent from an unmonitored address. Please do not reply. Please use links inline above to get additional information or help.

Microsoft respects your privacy. To learn more, please read our online Privacy Statement.

This is a mandatory service communication. If you wish to stop receiving emails about the Windows Insider Program, you will need to leave the program.

To set your contact preferences for other Microsoft communications, click here. Microsoft Corporation One Microsoft Way Redmond, WA 98052 USA

Of course, Lefty punched in the URL of the aforementioned blog to follow a link to a related Insider message thread. This put a fitting cap on the whole Insider experience for him, coming from an accomplished and proficient long time Insider.

Andre Da Costa replied on December 15

Accomplishments

- *MVP, Insider*
- *Community Moderator*
- *Completed Training*
- *MCC: Content Creator and Curator*
- *Conversationalist*
- *Launch expert - Windows 10*
- *Most Recommended Discussion*
- *Wiki Master and Author*

My feedback that I entered in the survey and why the Insider Program is not nipping these issues in the bud.

I am very displeased with the Insider experience and how it translates into the public release. For instance, the issue with the Privacy Settings issue when upgrading from the July Public Release to the November Update? It seems as much as Microsoft wants to make these revisions less disruptive, it will take some time before updates like 1511 can be delivered smoothly. I have to admit, installing 1511 was basically like upgrading to Windows 10 all over again. It is scaring a lot of persons seeing their PCs reboot into a setup routine. It needs to be less invasive. Preferably just delivering them as small KB updates like what has worked for many years. I am not satisfied with the Windows as a Service (WAAS) model. It needs to be less disruptive, it needs to be more reliable, it needs to be graceful, it needs to stop breaking PCs with Windows 7/8.1 installations that are functioning well.

The Upgrade Assistant needs to stop downloading GBs of data and killing space making the upgrade impossible, it needs to work better on devices persons bought only last year but can't get it installed on because the upgrade is having trouble being shoe horned. It needs to have better diagnostics and recovery tools. The Insider Program should be resolving these problems, it is not doing that. There needs to be a Windows 10

Errors Twitter account with ready information, when someone tweets you, an immediate answer. I participate in the forums everyday and I see frustration, reluctance from users who don't want to upgrade because of the bad experience. Upgrading to a new version of Windows should not be such a headache. I have to be causing potential upgraders to ensure they create a system image backup.

The issues with Digital Entitlement is also another issue, its not graceful either and needs more work. The MCT tool is also another area that needs work, you need to let users have more control, some persons have Pro licenses and that is what they want to upgrade to. There is so much frustration. I want Windows 10 to be a success, I see the benefits, but its hard getting persons to adopt it because of the amount of obstacles in the way. Persons are reporting of 10240 working great then 10586 breaking apps, there is still the issue and concern of privacy. My personal issue is how Windows 10 loves bandwidth.

Living in a rural area on a limited metered connection, Windows 10 does not have the common decency to respect that and sucks up my bandwidth without the consideration. Trust me, there needs to be a lot of work done. There have been successes, my laptop is running it quite well and my brothers Dell Inspiron upgraded successfully, but I am fearing my other brothers Toshiba. You need to also work closely with getting the video drivers sorted out, Windows 10 reporting of compatibility issues before and after upgrade. Provide thorough end to end advice what the users should do. For example, you could put something that says, 'Yes, your video card is reporting incompatibilities, but here is what you can do, uninstall it now, then proceed with the upgrade and Windows will download the latest driver from Windows Update for you'. Give the user some confidence and comfort.

Best, Andre

Windows Expert – Consumer

"In theory, there is no difference between theory and practice. But in practice, there is." - Yogi Berra

Oh Windows 10 News, I just can't quit you. Now Forbes has gotten into the act, and jumped on the bandwagon to criticize what MS was doing.

Forbes /Tech, Gordon Kelly, Dec 16
Microsoft Makes Windows 10 'Free Upgrades' Worse
Choice. After all the software improvements, promotional offers and good intentions, 'choice' is the big factor Microsoft forgot to consider with Windows 10. Falling adoption rates have seen the company's initial smugness evolve into incredulity and increasingly dirty tactics and now Microsoft appears to have forgotten about respecting choice entirely because life for Windows 7 and Windows 8 users is about to get a lot worse…

Why Windows 10 Upgrades Now 'Cannot Be Stopped'
If you use Windows 7 or Windows 8 then chances are you will have noticed something rather strange and annoying is happening. MS is rolling out software changes which are making it increasingly difficult for mainstream users to avoid upgrading to Windows 10 – and this is why…
The Misleading Upgrade
Along with a trio of nasty changes, the one which has caught users most off guard is a simple and highly misleading change to the language surrounding Windows 10 upgrades. In effect Microsoft is now telling Windows 7 and Windows 8 users that they have to upgrade and it cannot be stopped.
…To understand why Microsoft has embarked upon such an aggressive update strategy you need to realize the importance of Windows 10 to the company's entire future. In short: everything depends on it.
… Consequently the short answer to why Microsoft is taking such an extreme path in forcing Windows 10 upon its users all boils down to this: because it can.

Lefty wrote one more summary poem for the Epic Fail forum guys and gals. It was a summation of Microsoft's pyrrhic victory, perhaps.

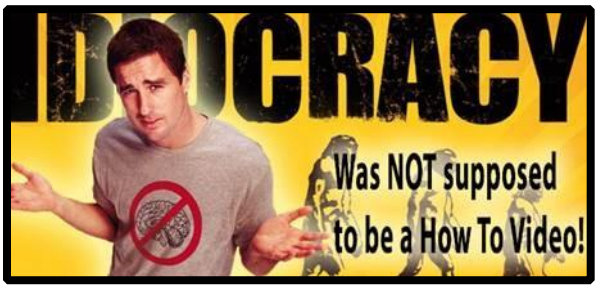
Oh, Apple, Google, and Microsoft

Eight years ago with iOS and Android, you surprised the world in your prime
Giving folks a pocket device to consume and waste away their lifetimes
Apple knew better than to shrink the Mac, for fear its users would attack
So you grew the iPod, despite the quality and performance it lacked
Google bought a phone OS using all their money
Then monetized this for all to see that the idea was not at all funny
iOS, is Slow, Laggy, Bloaty, Crashy, Buggy, and Drainy, we are aware
Your Google Android spying platform has evolved to become but a cesspool of malware
A cellphone from MS was not something to make a Windows user scream

A reoccurring Windows user nightmare, was a MS content consumption machine
But you both made MS chase your four inch screen, pipe dream
Now IDC says you can have a three percent market by twenty-nineteen
Android at eighty, iOS will own the other seventeen
Chasing a market of two million phones and a million slabs
On your three hundred million PC market, you lost tabs
With Windows they could not compete
But MS they were determined to beat
Your plans made MS destroy it for you
Enough of this flat minimalist, low quality shit already,
WE IMPLORE YOU!

The time had come for an end to all this nonsense now. For the first time for twenty-plus years; there were no new Windows versions to test, as Beta testing was now done on unsuspecting users via "updates". Lefty spent his adult life testing Windows beta software, and had used each successive version of Windows, each of which was better – until they weren't. He used great software over his career; Ventura Publisher, Micrografx Designer, WordPerfect, Autodesk Animator, PaintShop Pro, MS Office, Dragon Dictate, and Kurzweil Voice, WS_FTP, Norton Ghost, Adobe Acrobat, MS FrontPage, but those days were now long gone. The PC was now effectively dead. No one wrote good software anymore. Now low quality, minimally functional, finger based, Cloud-based App *crapware* was the norm. Minimalist Apps that allow you to partake in this millennial foolishness, like putting fruit hats on pets, tweeting nonsense, absorbing mass disinformation, and sending dick pics.

The predictions of Idiocracy seemed to have been realized.[99]



Lefty worked on computers starting when Bill Gates gave us DOS and Windows 1.0. He had first learned programing in BASIC and visually with ToolBook. The latter included a programming language called OpenScript from Asymetrix Learning Systems, created by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen.

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[99] *Idiocracy is a 2006 American satirical comedy film, which tells the story of an "average American", selected by the Pentagon for a hibernation program. He awakens 500 years later within a dystopian society where advertising, commercialism, and anti-intellectualism have run rampant, and is also devoid of any intellectual curiosity, social responsibility, or coherent notions of justice and human rights. A society so dumbed down, he is now the most intelligent person alive. During the 2016 presidential primaries, the movie's director Mike Judge when questioned about predicting the future remarked, "I'm no prophet; my prediction was off by some 490 years."*

For twenty years, first Apple, IBM, BeOS, UNIX and its many variants, and then later Google tried and failed to compete with MS Windows. For a solid 20 years, Bill Gates commanded a Midas touch. Now Billy G. had retired to manage his both brilliant and generous philanthropic works. Apple and Google tricked a now lame brained MS, into killing Windows itself by making them chase a pipe dream. ***The collateral damage was the death of the personal computer, as known for all these years. The promise was murdered.*** The true Geeks, would carry on, improvise, adapt, and overcome, as they always did.

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

Lefty saw no need to create another profile and battle the remaining trolls, shills, and fanbois. It seemed fitting to be banished by MS for eternity to A.User status, like Icarus.[100]

[100] *In Greek mythology, Icarus and his father attempt to escape the island of Crete with wings constructed of feathers and wax. His father warns him of complacency and hubris, warning that he not fly too low nor too high, so the sea's dampness would not clog his wings or the sun's heat melt them. Icarus ignored the warnings, flew too close to the sun, the wings melted, and he fell into the sea.*

Epilogue

Microsoft publicly and privately encouraged the Insiders to help them design and build a new desktop OS. The Insiders wanted a replacement for the much-loved, much used Windows 7, one that would incorporate lessons learned from Windows 8. It all ended up as a cynical deception, a Cozening of the still naïve Insiders. The Mobile First, Cloud First, mantra now overruled any remaining common sense at MS. They now believed their own marketing speak, that real work could be done on four-inch screens. This vision of the future in one way or another came to them, and they no longer knew any better.

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

After a couple years of his pointless, fruitless, time wasting, involvement in the Insider forum, it was long past time for Lefty to move on. He had closed his business and retired the previous year, and now needed to spend time outdoors working on his land. Time spent enjoying the deer, turtles, ducks, geese, wild turkeys, sand hill cranes, blue heron, egrets, and the occasional bald eagle that traverse the diverse habitats of his acreage. He watched the belted kingfishers diving into his pond for food.

He became more involved with non-computer activities, as he lost patience in the silliness of the current generation, except perhaps the latest crop of baseball players. This is especially true of the Cubs Venezuelan catcher Contreras, and utility

infielder the Puerto Rican born Biaz, who both play the game much like his boyhood hero Roberto Clemente did. For now, Lefty was content to just sit and watch the wheels go round and round.

Moving his computers to a variant of the Linux operating system would be stepping back 25 years in time for a learning curve. He had already been there and done that. Most of his favorite software programs would not work and did not have a comparable program for his environment. Application software development was now essentially dead. His remaining choice was to protect his Windows 7 installations from the now evil MS by turning off Windows updates, shutting off the service itself, and editing the registry database within the bowels of the Windows software. He would now not trust installing a single update from MS as they have repeatedly proven themselves to be deceptive and untrustworthy. He also used a modified host's file, to map hostnames to IP addresses, which help prevent Win7 from continuously phoning data home to the mothership at MS.

Unwilling to quit the Insider program completely, he would continue downloading builds from time to time, but any hope of anything that was usable coming out of Redmond had long since been abandoned.

Precious little information was given on new Win10 builds initially, but much later, some info was provided regarding known bugs and the bugs fixed within each flight. The overall OS did not remarkably change throughout the whole process, but components like Edge and Cortana were added or improved. They also cleaned up the icons some due to severe criticism, and made minor changes to the windows themselves.

What they got initially, was pretty much what they ended up having, and that was unacceptable to many.

The long awaited Redstone would be an incremental improvement to a disaster.

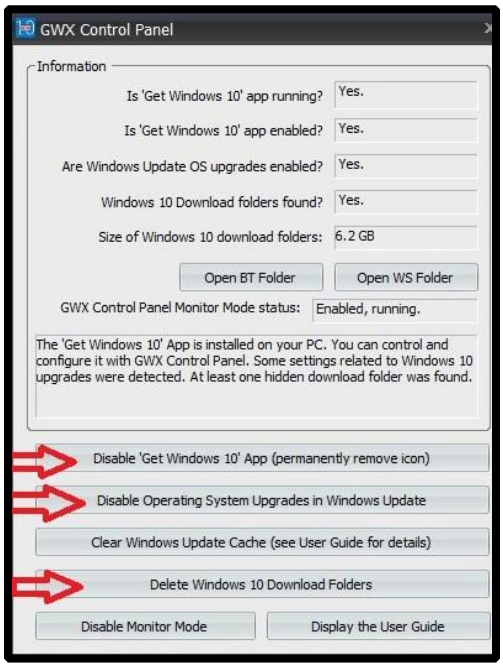
> *What is Redstone? It's the next big update to Windows 10 slated for release sometime soon.*
> *Redstone is the second update coming for Windows 10 and is a larger update compared to Threshold 2. Redstone will be what Windows 8.1 was to Windows 8 essentially, bringing much needed changes and improvements to the feature-set*

and design of Windows 10. Redstone is scheduled to launch around a year after Windows 10 did, and is pretty much 'next' version of Windows.

Grateful he no longer needed to depend upon Microsoft for the tools he needed to run his businesses for the first time during his professional life, he would now retire. He would continue playing with computers as a hobby, as his lifelong curiosity of technology continued, but now on no one's schedule but his own.

Lefty used both satellite and terrestrial television video feeds to his house and shop, and a rural broadband wireless Internet connection supplying both.

As a hobby, he continued to fix and update computers for himself, and local small town hardware stores, local farmers, and insurance agencies. He shut off MS updates for Windows 7, and now used a simple program called GWX control Panel, authored by the Ultimate Outsider, to prevent windows 10 from automatically forcing itself onto their computers without user permission.



This tool also removed the "Get windows 10" nags allowing you to remove the Windows 10 malware and prevent reinfection.

He helped his local volunteer fire department who dealt in life and death. There was no place for half-baked ever-changing beta versions of Windows 10 on their computers.

He helped local dairy farmers who only want to manage their herds, keep track of calf nutrition, and manage the farm accounts without the constant interruption of updates and the software and hardware incompatibilities they introduce. Not all segments of the economy or the business world needed to or wanted to move at the speed of Redmond or Silicon Valley.

He had created and operated two successful businesses across 25 years, and he was tired of all of this now. He had been everywhere he wanted to go, and met everyone he wanted to meet.

The seed for writing a novel had been placed thirty years earlier, after seeing Rob Reiner's directorial movie debut called "Stand By Me". He dusted these words off now, being past time to expend the effort to bring closure to his ideas. He loved the structure of writing, the focus of thought required, and the feelings of being *in the zone* with the mental disengagement from his surroundings. He also enjoyed the creative process of putting appropriately crafted, words and sentences on paper. He strove to produce relevant, interesting, meaningful, occasionally clever, and sometimes humorous prose for his first novel.

You see for Lefty, the real work that remained to be accomplished was writing about his dreams, his loves, his aspirations, and his life.

He will live out his life as mediated by the screens in front of him, and he so loves telling stories.

This book was produced using MS Windows 7 Pro, 2013 MS Word, StyleWriter4, MS Excel, MS Paint, MS Visio, and 2010 MS Picture Manager. No Mac's were use in the production of this document.

This book is dedicated to my generations many hundreds of thousands of heroes lost or damaged due to their Vietnam War experiences, and never given the opportunity that I was to live their lives, fulfill their passions, and contribute to the best aspects of our shared American dream.

I remain in awe of the brave world citizens of our current time, Edward Snowden, Julian Assange, Chelsea Manning, Jeremy Hammond, John Kiriakou, Thomas Drake, Bill Binney, and Reality Winner.

I mourn those no longer among us, and treasure the contributions and insights of the many early computer and Internet pioneers not mentioned. These include Robert William (Bob) Taylor, J. C. R. Licklider, George Pake, Jerome I. Elkind, David C. Evans, Jeff Rulifson, Douglas Engelbart, Theodor Nelson, Charles M. Herzfeld, Larry Tesler, Alan Kay, Norm Abramson, Judy Estrin, David Clarke, and Lawrence G. Roberts, to name but a few.

About the author

I am a veteran of the US Army U.N. Peace Keeping Force, a former Peace Corps volunteer, and taught at the secondary and post-secondary levels. I worked in corporate technical training and course development, technical document production. I was a public school teacher and school board member and coached multilevel baseball for ten years. I created, managed, and operated two small businesses involved in document production, custom computer building and computer integration, as well as computer refurbishing for more than twenty-five years. I am now retired, and when not working on computers, I am writing in the computer user forums, writing fictional stories, or watching baseball games. I am seeking my first widely published book with the work on this manuscript.

Write to the author at lefty@tcw.org

This machine kills fascists

Image Courtesy: Woody Guthrie Archives

This machine kills secrets, but also kills privacy

Image Courtesy: Microsoft.com

These systems kill democracy

Images Courtesy: Wikipedia.org

In 1974 Ted Nelson gave us his books Computer Lib/Dream Machines in the hope that computers would liberate and augment the human race and not imprison us in the manner George Orwell described. The reality today however is that we need to be endlessly mindful of the ways these machines, despite their inherent value, have been constructed and corrupted to actively work against us and the best interests of our species.